



FLASHPOINT

Tensions Flair After Ferguson Police Ambush

Attorney General Eric Holder condemns the shooting of two police officers in Ferguson, Mo., at the Department of Justice on Thursday, March 12, 2015, in Washington. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik) Page 4

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Homeland Security probing US agents' crash near White House



In this 2011 photo, President Barack Obama is seen at College Green in Dublin, Ireland with Mark Connolly, the second-in-command on Obama's security detail, to his left. The Homeland Security Department is investigating two senior Secret Service agents accused of crashing a car into a White House security barrier, an agency spokesman says.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

ALICIA A. CALDWELL
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Homeland Security Department is investigating two senior Secret Service agents accused of crashing a car into a White House security barrier, an agency spokesman says. Secret Service spokesman Robert Hoback said Wednesday that recently appointed Director Joseph Clancy has been briefed on the March 4 incident. Clancy has asked the department's internal investigator to look into the incident. The crash investigation is the latest embarrassment for the agency tasked with protecting the president. In the last six months, several top agency officials, including former Director Julian Pierson, have been forced out amid revelations of multiple, serious presidential protection security breaches. In September, a man armed with a knife was able to climb a White House fence and run deep into the executive

mansion before being apprehended. An internal investigation and an outside panel report both described serious problems within the agency. Hoback did not provide additional details. Despite the investigation, the White House said President Barack Obama still has full confidence in Clancy. White House spokesman Eric Schultz says Obama was disappointed to learn about the incident. But he says nobody has higher standards for the Secret Service than Clancy. Schultz says Clancy will continue making reforms to address the problems in the agency. White House spokesman Eric Schultz says Obama was disappointed to learn about the incident. But he says nobody has higher standards for the Secret Service than Clancy. Schultz says Clancy will continue making reforms to address the problems in the agency.

The two agents The Washington Post first reported the investigation Wednesday. The newspaper reported that the agents drove a government car into a security barrier near the White House after a night of drinking. The Post reported that one of the agents involved is Mark Connolly, the second-in-command on Obama's security detail. The news-

paper identified the other agent as George Ogilvie, a senior supervisor in the Washington field office. The leaders of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee — Republican chairman Jason Chaffetz and top Democrat Elijah Cumming — issued a statement Wednesday saying, "The fact that this event involved senior-level agents is not only em-

barrassing but exhibits a clear lack of judgment in a potentially dangerous situation." A four-member panel of former senior government officials concluded in a report released last year that the agency was too insular and starving for leadership. The panel recommended an agency outsider to replace Pierson after his ouster. □



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Tensions flair after Ferguson police officers ambushed

JOHN ELIGON
RICHARD PEÑA

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FERGUSON, Mo. - The two police officers who were shot here early Thursday were victims of "an ambush," the St. Louis County police chief said, hours after gunfire rang out in front of the police station, throwing into panic what had been a largely peaceful protest.

Demonstrators and police officers alike hit the ground

when the shots echoed through the crisp air shortly after midnight, striking the two officers. Many people ran for cover, and police officers clad in riot gear dragged their wounded comrades to safety. Other officers crouched behind cars and walls, drawing their handguns or rifles as they rapidly swiveled their heads every which way to survey their surroundings.

The injured officers were released from the hospital

Thursday morning.

"We're lucky by God's grace we didn't lose two officers last night," Chief Jon Belmar of the St. Louis County Police Department said at a midmorning news conference. It was clear that the police were the targets, he said, adding, "This is really an ambush, is what it is."

Echoing Belmar's comments, Attorney General Eric Holder called the shootings "heinous and



Police and protesters square off outside the Ferguson Police Department Thursday, March 12, 2015.

(AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

cowardly attacks."

"This was not someone trying to bring healing to Ferguson," Holder said. "This was a damn punk, a punk, who was trying to sow discord."

President Barack Obama weighed in on Twitter, writing: "Violence against police is unacceptable. Our prayers are with the officers in MO. Path to justice is one all of us must travel together."

Later in the morning, in an action that officials said was part of the investigation into the shooting, police SWAT units surrounded a house a few blocks from the shooting scene, and officers climbed onto the roof and broke through a vent there to gain access.

"People have been taken in for questioning," said a police spokesman, Sgt. Brian Schellman. "No arrests at this point."

Belmar said people had a right to protest peacefully, but also said "there is an unfortunate association with that gathering" and the shooting. "I feel confident that for whatever reason they were observers, whatever you want to call it, with the group of individuals that were down there protesting," he said. "This is no reflection, again, on any of those guys; they

can't help it."

Witnesses among the demonstrators denied any link to the shootings, saying that they believed the shots originated from the top of a hill about 220 yards directly across from the station. Belmar did not specify a location but estimated the distance at 125 yards.

"There's just no way anybody I know did that," said Bob Hudgins, a protester who is running for City Council. "This was completely out of the blue, and they were not attached or embedded" with the demonstration.

"Nobody's happy about this today," he said.

The shooting threatened to ratchet up tensions and undo efforts to change the way the police here do business and to heal the anger and frustration that have boiled over since Aug. 9, when a white police officer, Darren Wilson, fatally shot an unarmed, 18-year-old black man, Michael Brown.

The Brown family, in a statement from its lawyer, denounced "the actions of stand-alone agitators" who tried to derail the protests. "We reject any kind of violence directed toward members of law enforcement," the statement said. □



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Carjack victim describes harrowing ride with Boston bombers



People leave federal court to board a bus carrying Boston Marathon bombing survivors, family and friends after attending the federal death penalty trial of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev in Boston, Thursday, March 12, 2015.

DENISE LAVOIE
AP Legal Affairs Writer

BOSTON (AP) — A carjack victim on Thursday described his harrowing ride at gunpoint with the Boston Marathon bombers three days after the attacks and the moment he made the terrifying decision to bolt from the car. Dun Meng, a Chinese national who moved to the U.S. in 2009 to attend Boston's Northeastern University, testified in bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's trial that he had left work in Cambridge late on the night of April 18, 2013, when he pulled over and returned a text message. A car quickly pulled up behind him, a man got out and knocked on his passenger-side window. Meng said he thought the

man was asking for directions, so he lowered his window. The man then reached in, opened the door and quickly jumped into his car, Meng said. "He point a gun to me — right to my head — he ask money first, 'Where's your cash?'" Meng said. Meng said he later learned the man was Tamerlan Tsarnaev, one of two brothers who had detonated twin bombs near the finish line of the marathon, killing three people and injuring more than 260. Hours before the carjacking, the FBI had publicly released photos of the Tsarnaevs as suspects in the bombing. Meng said he told Tamerlan Tsarnaev he only had about \$40 in cash, and Tsarnaev pulled the maga-

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

zine out of his gun to show him the bullets inside. "He told me, 'You know I'm serious so don't be stupid.'" Meng said Tsarnaev asked him if he knew who committed the Boston Marathon bombing. "He said, 'I did it, and I just killed a policeman in Cambridge,'" Meng said. Meng said he realized then that this was more than a robbery. "I was very scared," he said. Prosecutors said shortly before the carjacking, the Tsarnaev brothers shot Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer Sean Collier in a failed attempt to steal his gun. After driving around for 20 or 30 minutes, Meng said, Tamerlan told him to pull over on a street and a sedan pulled up behind

them. Meng said Tamerlan helped a man in that car load items from the sedan into Meng's Mercedes-Benz SUV. Meng identified the second man as Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, pointing to him

in court. "The gentleman over there," he said. Meng said Tamerlan drove his car to a bank machine, where Dzhokhar asked him for his pin number and then withdrew money from his account. □



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Attorney: Woman in Silicon Valley suit misrepresented firing

S. THANAWALA
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The woman suing a prestigious Silicon Valley venture capital firm for alleged gender discrimination accepted a generous severance package that gave her salary, access to her company email and kept her biography on the company website. Yet she immediately started telling people she was abruptly fired and contacting companies to let them know she would no longer be working with them.

An attorney for the firm, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, questioned Ellen Pao on Thursday about her actions, as she tried to portray the former executive as someone who misrepresented and twisted facts.

"It was the right thing for you," attorney Lynne Hermle said of Pao's decision to contact companies to let them know she had been let go. Pao responded that it was the right thing for the companies. She has said she was abruptly fired after filing her lawsuit alleging gender discrimination at the firm and told to pack her things by the end of the day. The case has drawn attention to the gender imbalance at venture capital and technology companies that attract high-powered talent from some of the best universities in the nation, but where women are grossly underrepresented.

Pao's severance package included her salary — \$33,000 a month — and set her actual separation date

six months in the future. Hermle questioned why Pao almost immediately posted on an online mes-

sage board and said on her Kleiner Perkins voice-mail message that she had been terminated. Kleiner Perkins has also said Pao had a history of conflicts with her colleagues



Ellen Pao, right, leaves the Civic Center Courthouse along with her attorney, Therese Lawless, left, during her trial in San Francisco.

(AP Photo/Eric Risberg)

shared a chart Pao had created listing "resentments" she held against John Doerr, a prominent venture capitalist and senior partner at the firm, a male colleague with whom she had an affair and another male colleague.

Doerr was Pao's mentor at the firm and has testified that he tried to increase the number of women at Kleiner Perkins. Among the resentments Pao accused Doerr of was "tolerating incompetence."

Pao's attorneys have tried to paint Kleiner Perkins as an old-boys club where their client was subject to boorish behavior by men and denied a seat on a company board and a promotion because she was a woman. They are seeking \$16 million in damages. □

Teen killer in Pamela Smart scandal is granted parole

LYNNE TUOHY
Associated Press

CONCORD, New Hampshire (AP)—The triggerman in the Pamela Smart murder trial was granted parole Thursday, nearly 25 years after he killed his school instructor's husband and launched a global spectacle packed with lurid details of sex and manipulation. William Flynn was 16-year-old "Billy" in 1990 when he and three teenage friends carried out what prosecutors said was Pamela Smart's plot to murder Gregg Smart. Flynn pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 28 years to life in prison, minus time

served before trial. The trial was a media circus and one of the first high-profile cases about a sexual affair between an instructor and student. It inspired the Joyce Maynard novel "To Die For," which in turn was made into a movie starring Nicole Kidman. The board granted Flynn parole on his 41st birthday. He has been in a Maine prison and participated in the hearing by telephone, telling the board that he'd always be haunted by the killing.

"I will always feel terrible about what happened 25 years ago," he said. "Parole will not change that." Pamela Smart, who was

22 when her husband was killed, was convicted of being an accomplice to first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without the chance of parole.

She admitted seducing the boy but said she didn't plan her husband's murder. According to trial testimony, Smart was one of Flynn's instructors in a self-awareness program at Winnacunnet High School in Hampton when she first seduced him when he was 15.

She told him she needed her husband killed because she feared she would lose everything if they divorced. Flynn testified in Smart's

1991 trial that she threatened to break up with him if he didn't kill her husband. On May 1, 1990, he and 17-year-old Patrick Randall entered the Smarts' Derry condominium and forced Gregory Smart to his knees in the foyer.

As Randall held a knife to the man's throat, Flynn fired a hollow-point bullet into his head. Randall got 28 years to life; he comes up for parole in April. Two other teenagers served prison sentences and have been released.

Pamela Smart has steadfastly denied knowing about the plot. But the state's star witness, a teenage intern in whom Smart

confided, secretly recorded her after the killing saying, "If you tell the (expletive) truth, you'll send me to the slammer for the rest of my (expletive) life." Stories of the trial and Flynn's testimony about their affair were picked up internationally, and cameras caught every graphic image and detail.

Before the decision to grant parole was issued, the victim's brother, Dean Smart, read a letter from his 23-year-old daughter, Ashley.

"Mr. Flynn is only in this situation because he decided to play God one night and take an innocent man's life," her letter said. □



US Financial Front:

Winter chills US economy, but slowdown should thaw

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For a second year, harsh winter weather has kept Americans away from shopping centers, slowed home sales and weighed on U.S. economic growth.

Yet there may be little

prices.

A separate report Thursday showed, though, that far fewer people applied for unemployment benefits last week than in the previous week. The report offered evidence that layoffs remain low and that the job market and the econo-

by weather — jumped 2.2 percent last month. It was the biggest gain in nearly a year.

And restaurant sales, which have been accelerating but are particularly weather-sensitive, fell by the largest amount in 13 months.

The report on applications for unemployment aid showed that the number of people seeking first-time benefits plunged 36,000 last week to 289,000. The drop reversed an increase of 40,000 in the previous week. That jump was probably weather-related, given that low temperatures and snowstorms shut construction sites, closed schools and caused a wave of temporary layoffs. Last week's decline in applications confirmed that employers are still confident enough in the economy to hold on to their staffs. The number of people applying for unemployment benefits each week tends to reflect the pace of layoffs.

Joseph LaVorgna, an economist at Deutsche Bank, calculates that last month was the coldest since December 2000, measured by the number of days that households used an above-average amount of heat.

With spending weak, a strong dollar holding down U.S. exports, and oil and gas drillers cutting back on investment, economists are marking down their estimates for economic growth in the current January-March quarter.

Jesse Hurwitz, an economist at Barclays Capital,

has downgraded his forecast to a tepid annual rate of between 1.5 percent and 1.8 percent.

That compares with 2.2 percent annual growth in last year's fourth quarter and is far below the blistering 4.8 percent pace last spring and summer.

Still, employers appear to be looking past the current soft spot. They added an average of 288,000 jobs a month from December through February, evidence that they regard any slower growth as tem-

porary.

A similar trend occurred last year: The economy actually shrank in the first three months of 2014, largely because of brutal weather from the "polar vortex." Even so, employers kept right on hiring, and the economy rebounded.

Nearly 3.3 million more Americans are earning paychecks compared with a year ago.

Those additional jobs are lifting total household income — and spending power. □



A shopper carries JCPenney shopping bags, in New York. The Commerce Department released retail sales data for February on Thursday, March 12, 2015.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

cause for concern. The steadily strengthening U.S. job market and low gas prices suggest that the slowdown will likely prove temporary — just as a winter-related slump did last year.

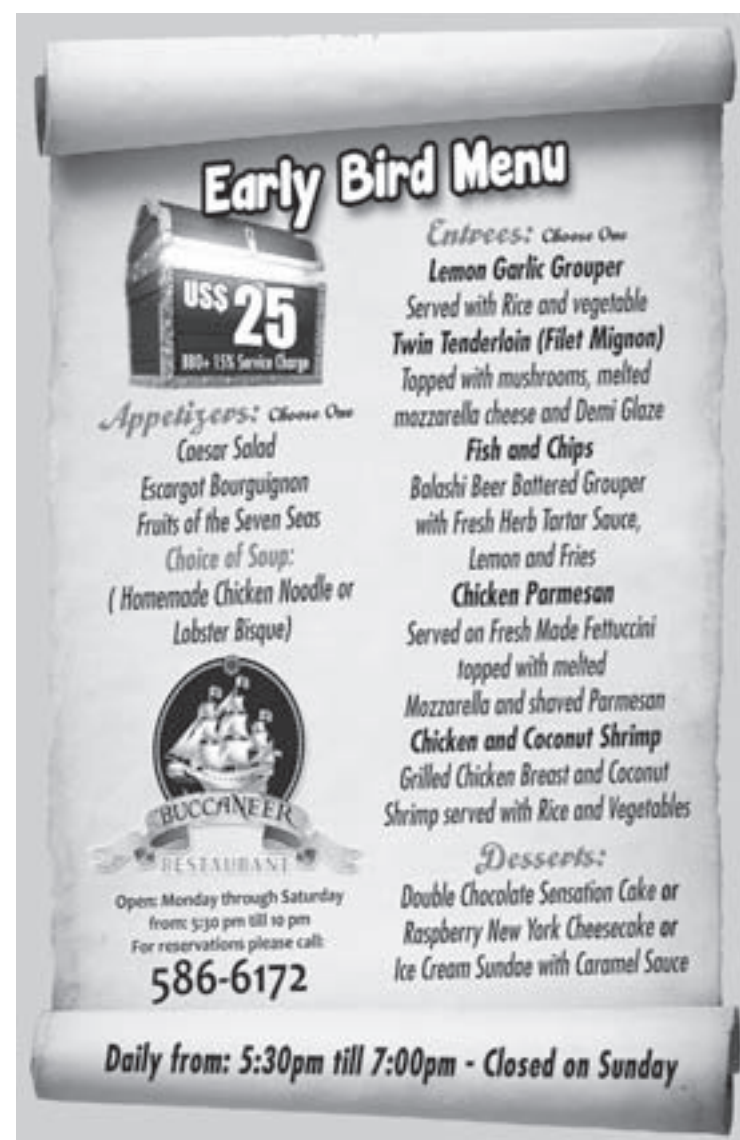
Retail sales fell 0.6 percent in February, the government said Thursday, the third straight drop. Americans cut back on car buying by the most in more than a year. Sales also fell at restaurants, home improvement centers and electronics and appliance stores. The figures showed that consumers were slow to boost spending despite robust hiring in the past year and sharply lower gas

my are still solid.

The retail sales report "doesn't change our view that the economic recovery is strengthening," said Paul Ashworth, chief U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

"With the labor market on fire, we suspect that incomes, and eventually consumption too, will continue to grow at a healthy pace."

Details in the spending report supported the notion that Americans are still willing to spend and that sales should rise along with temperatures. Spending in a category that includes online and catalog retailers — which isn't affected



American budget deficit totals \$192.3 billion in February

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government ran a slightly smaller deficit in February than a year ago but the imbalance through the first five months of the budget year is still running ahead of last year.

The Treasury Department reported Thursday that the deficit in February was \$192.3 billion, down from a deficit of \$193.5 billion a year ago. For the first five months of this budget year, the deficit totals \$386.5 billion, up 2.7 percent from a

deficit of \$376.4 billion during the first five months of the 2014 budget year.

For the entire budget year, which ends Sept. 30, the Congressional Budget Office is forecasting a deficit of \$486 billion, up 0.6 percent from the 2014 deficit of \$483.4 billion. The 2014 deficit was the smallest annual imbalance in six years. Through the first five months of the budget year, revenues total \$1.19 trillion, up 7.1 percent from the same period a year ago, while outlays total \$1.57 trillion, up 7 percent from a

year ago. The 2014 deficit was down from \$680.2 billion in 2013. Before 2013, the nation recorded four straight years of deficits topping \$1 trillion annually, reflecting the impact of a severe financial crisis and the worst economic downturn since the Great Recession of the 1930s. President Barack Obama last month unveiled a new budget proposal which projects the 2015 deficit will rise to \$583 billion, sharply higher than CBO's estimate for this year. Obama is asking Congress for authoriza-

tion to spend \$4 trillion next year and projects a deficit in 2016 of \$474 billion.

The CBO released an analysis of Obama's budget proposal on Thursday which estimated that the deficit for 2016 would actually fall to \$380 billion if Obama's proposals on spending and taxes were adopted by Congress.

The president's budget plan proposes increasing taxes on the wealthy and using the extra income to rebuild America's aging roads and bridges as well as providing two years of

free community college to qualified students and trimming future deficits to what the administration said would be manageable levels. But Republicans, who now control both the House and the Senate, have attacked Obama's plan for raising taxes and failing to tackle rising costs for the government's biggest benefit programs, Social Security and Medicare.

GOP lawmakers have pledged that the budgets they put together in coming weeks will eliminate deficits over the next decade. □

Lumber Liquidators to pay for safety testing of flooring



A man walks past a Lumber Liquidators store, Thursday, March 12, 2015, in Philadelphia. Retailer Lumber Liquidators says it stands by its products and will pay for the safety testing of laminate floors for qualifying customers. The Toano, Va., company on Thursday addressed concerns raised following a "60 Minutes" report said the company's laminate flooring made in China contained high levels of formaldehyde, a carcinogen.

(AP Photo/Matt Slocum)

M. FELBERBAUM

AP Business Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Retailer Lumber Liquidators said Thursday that it stands

by its products and will pay for the safety testing of laminate floors for customers to help ease concerns. The Toano, Virginia, com-

pany addressed concerns raised following a "60 Minutes" report said the company's laminate flooring made in China contained

high levels of formaldehyde, a carcinogen.

The report earlier this month said the company's laminate flooring fell short of California's standards, something it denies. Lumber Liquidators has said that it complies with all regulations for its products. "We are confident that all of our products are safe and none of our products pose significant health or safety issues," CEO Rob Lynch said, adding it would "never knowingly" put customer health or safety at risk.

Customers are understandably concerned because "sensationalized reports provide little context," the company said in a regulatory filing ahead of its business update with investors. "We are incensed that individuals with a financial agenda can orchestrate a campaign against us re-

garding the safety of our product and cause a portion of our customer base undue concern," Lynch said.

In the nine days following the broadcast, Lumber Liquidators says sales at stores open at least a year — a key gauge of a retailer's health because it excludes the volatility from stores recently opened or closed — fell nearly 13 percent but sales are returning to normal levels.

Lumber Liquidators said the indoor air quality test kits that customers will receive are the same quality used by federal officials to test workplace exposure. So far, less than 1,000 customers have requested the testing kit. If tests show high levels of formaldehyde, the company said it will pay for further testing and may pay to reinstall flooring. □

Applications for US unemployment benefits fall sharply

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment benefits fell sharply last week, a sign that strong hiring will likely continue.

Weekly applications for unemployment aid dropped 36,000 to a seasonally adjusted 289,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. The drop nearly reversed a large increase from last month, which likely oc-

curred because of cold weather and snowstorms.

The four-week average, a less volatile measure, fell 3,750 to 302,250. The average has dropped nearly 9 percent in the past year.

Applications are a proxy for layoffs. The decline indicates companies are confident enough to hold onto their staffs and hire more workers. Weekly applications had risen by 40,000 last month. Economists blamed most of that rise on harsh

winter weather that closed schools and shut down construction sites, causing temporary layoffs.

The economy has faltered a bit in recent months, growing much more slowly than the 4.8 percent annual rate that it reached last spring and summer. Growth was just 2.2 percent in final three months of last year, and many economists expect similarly modest growth in the first three months of this year.

Still, employers added an average of 288,000 jobs a month from December through February, a strong pace that has lowered the unemployment rate to 5.5 percent. That suggests employers see the slowdown as temporary. Nearly 3.3 million more Americans are earning paychecks compared with 12 months ago. That should boost spending and economic growth for the rest of this year. The strong job gains have yet

to translate into higher pay. Average hourly earnings rose 2 percent in February from a year earlier, down from a 2.2 percent annual gain in the previous month. Paychecks could pick up soon, however. More Americans are quitting their jobs, a report Tuesday showed, meaning that more are moving on to better, usually higher paying positions. That can force employers to pay more to attract and keep workers. □

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On two fronts, Iraqi forces battle Islamic State for Tikrit



Iraqi security forces prepare to attack Islamic State extremists at Camp Speicher, the front line in Tikrit, 80 miles north of Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, March 12, 2015. Rockets and mortars echoed across Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit on Thursday as Iraqi security forces clashed with Islamic State militants a day after sweeping into the Sunni city north of Baghdad.

(AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

QASSIM ZAHRA
Associated Press

TIKRIT, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi troops clashed along two fronts with Islamic State militants in Tikrit on Thursday as rockets and mortars echoed across Saddam Hussein's hometown a day after soldiers and allied Shiite militiamen swept into this Sunni city north of Baghdad.

Recapturing Tikrit is seen as a key step toward rolling back the gains of the extremist Islamic State group, which seized much of northern and western Iraq in a blitz last summer and now controls about a third of both Iraq and Syria.

The offensive also will serve as a major crucible for Iraqi forces, which collapsed under the extremists' initial offensive last year and now face one of the Sunni militant group's biggest strongholds.

Iraqi forces entered Tikrit for the first time on Wednesday from the north and south. On Thursday, they were fighting their way through the city and expected to reach the center within three to four days, accord-

ing to Lt. General Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi, the commander of the Tikrit operation.

The IS militants were trying to repel the Iraqi forces with snipers, suicide car bombs, heavy machine guns and mortars, said al-Saadi, speaking to The Associated Press at the front-lines.

Tikrit, the capital of Salahuddin province, sits on the Tigris River about 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of Baghdad. Several of Saddam's palaces remain there, and supporters of the deceased dictator are believed to have played a key role in the Islamic State group's seizure of the city last year.

Iraqi Defense Minister Khaled al-Obeidi, who was also at the front-line on Thursday, told the AP that the operation to retake Tikrit is "essential to opening a corridor for security forces to move from the south to Mosul," he said, referring to Iraq's second-largest city and the militants' biggest stronghold.

He described the operation as "100% Iraqi, from the air and ground."

When the Islamic State last year swept into Mosul, the U.S.-trained Iraqi military crumbled and the militants seized tanks, missile launchers and ammunition, steamrolling across northern Iraq. The CIA estimates the Sunni militant group has access to between 20,000 and 31,000 fighters in Iraq and Syria. Military officials believe there may about 150 foreign fighters with the IS inside Tikrit, including fighters from Chechnya and the Arab Gulf countries.

Iraqi officials now say that at least 30,000 men — including the military, militias, Sunni tribes and police — are fighting to capture Ti-

krit.

U.S. Gen. Martin Dempsey, the Joint Chiefs chairman, said Wednesday that at least 20,000 militiamen are taking part in the Tikrit fighting.

On Thursday, militiamen were heard intercepting IS walkie-talkie signals, listening to the militants' call for reinforcements and ordering mortar fire on the soldiers as they closed in. Along the route between Salahuddin's command center and the battlefield, charred remains of tankers and cars used by suicide bombers litter the roads, and homes bear signs of months of war, damaged by bombs and bullets. □



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Greek prime minister promises to keep paying creditors

PARIS (AP) — Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras insisted Thursday that his government will pay debts that are due soon even if Athens doesn't get part of

his government's reform plans, Tsipras said "it is certain that Greece will meet its obligations."

Still, he urged quick disbursement of part of a

government's concerns seriously.

Technical talks between Greece and its creditors began in Brussels on Wednesday to finalize a

Without the money, Greece will have real difficulties paying off debts that are due, raising the risk of bankruptcy and a potential exit from the euro currency. Since 2010, Greece has depended on 240 billion euros worth of bailout cash to meet its debt obligations.

Greece's creditors in the 19-country eurozone agreed last month to extend the country's bailout until June. However, the release of the final tranche of cash will only be sanctioned if the Greek government's reform plans are approved.

Building confidence over the government's plans was the main reason why Tsipras was in Paris. While there, Tsipras signed an accord with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development for co-operation on the reforms. The Greek government has

listed a series of reforms it intends to push through over coming months, with many aimed at tackling tax avoidance and evasion.

Tsipras said the OECD will put "its stamp on the reforms", which will be "very significant to build mutual trust" with Greece's creditors.

Greece and the OECD pledged to work together on a range of issues including strengthening the tax system, tackling oligopolies and cartels through greater competition and product market reforms, reducing the administrative burden to business and improving the efficiency of the country's state administration. "Our aim is to help kick-start growth and facilitate an inclusive and sustainable recovery of the Greek economy", OECD secretary general Angel Gurría said. □



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, left, addresses reporters during a joint press conference with OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría, at the OECD headquarter in Paris, Thursday March 12, 2015. (AP Photo/Remy de la Mauvinière)

a rescue loan that will only get released if current bailout talks are successful. While in the French capital to drum up support for

7.2-billion-euro (\$7.6 billion) rescue loan installment to prove to Greeks that international creditors are taking the new radical left

series of reforms Athens must implement in order to get the remaining funds from its bailout package released.

Gaza exports first produce to Israel since Hamas takeover

FARES AKRAM
Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip
(AP) — Israeli authorities al-

lowed the import of Gaza produce on Thursday for the first time since Hamas seized control of the terri-

tory in 2007, a move that will aid the Palestinian strip's battered economy and help pious Jews observe a biblical farming sabbatical. Some 27 tons of tomatoes and five tons of eggplants were cleared to leave Gaza for Israel, Palestinian officials and Gaza merchants said.

"Exporting to Israel is better, but insufficient," said Gaza merchant Hosni Shehada, who oversaw the preparation of half-ripe tomatoes and large eggplants for export at his warehouse.

Before Hamas took over the seaside territory nearly eight years ago, Gaza merchants used to export hundreds of tons of vegetables to Israel on a daily basis.

Israel and Egypt imposed a blockade after Hamas ousted forces loyal to the Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in bloody street battles.

Israel says the blockade is necessary to prevent Hamas from getting weapons. Critics say it amounts to collective punishment. Israel and Hamas have fought three wars since 2008, in-



A Palestinian farmer collects tomatoes in a greenhouse in order to export them to Israel, in the town of Deir el-Balah, central Gaza Strip. (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

cluding a 50-day war last summer.

Since then Israel has increased the amount of entry permits for Gaza merchants to travel to the West Bank and Israel for business, and allowed more textile and furniture exports.

COGAT, the military agency that handles Gaza civilian affairs, said other vegetables will later be marketed along with the tomatoes and eggplants. It said about 1,500 tons of Gaza produce are expected monthly, with each ton valued at about \$770.

Seventeen farmers sent produce samples to Israel for tests and only nine of

them met Israeli standards, the Gaza Agriculture Ministry said. The produce will be exported with the name of the farmer stamped in Arabic and English on the boxes under a "Product of Gaza" line.

The easing of restrictions coincides with the seventh-year sabbatical, called "shmita" in Hebrew, which began last fall. During that time, according to the Bible, Israeli farmers must give their lands a rest.

Loopholes enable Israelis to eat local produce, but are rejected by a minority of the very devout, who could find an alternative with the Gaza exports. □

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Nigeria:

South African mercenaries help in fight against Boko Haram



Chadian troops previously stationed by the Sudanese border make a stop on their way to lake Chad near Baga Sola. Large contingents of Chadian troops were seen heading to the region bordering Nigeria, where residents and an intelligence officer said Boko Haram fighters are massing at their headquarters in the northeast Nigerian town of Gwoza in preparation for a showdown with multinational forces.

(AP Photo / Jerome Delay)

ADAM NOSSITER

© 2015 New York Times

DAKAR, Senegal - Hundreds of South African mercenaries and hired fighters of other nationalities are playing a decisive role in Nigeria's military campaign against Boko Haram, operating attack helicopters, armored personnel carriers and fighting to retake towns

and villages captured by the Islamist militant group, according to senior officials in the region.

The Nigerian government has not acknowledged the presence of the mercenaries, but a senior government official in northern Nigeria said the South Africans - camped out in a remote portion of the airport

in Maiduguri, the city at the heart of Boko Haram's uprising - conduct most of their operations at night because "they really don't want to let people know what is going on."

He said the mercenaries' role was crucial, part of a new offensive against Boko Haram after a nearly six-year insurrection. The Nigerian military, under pressure because of a presidential election to be held this month, has recently claimed a string of successes against Boko Haram, boasting about the recapture of a number of towns. The mercenaries "are in the vanguard in the liberation of some of the communities," said the official,

speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

A senior Western diplomat confirmed that the South Africans were playing "a major operational role," particularly at night. Equipped with night vision goggles, the mercenaries "are whacking them in the evening hours. The next morning the Nigerian Army rolls in and claims success," the diplomat said.

Another diplomat, also unauthorized to speak on the matter, said he believed the mercenary force was composed of fighters from several countries but mainly South Africa.

The Nigerians' assertions of making headway follow

months in which portions of the country's territory were lost to Boko Haram, an Islamist militant group that has stormed into villages, killing civilians at random, abducting women and girls at will, and forcing tens of thousands of residents to flee across the country's northeast.

The war against Boko Haram has become a regional one, with Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Benin agreeing to contribute troops to an 8,700-member force to fight the militants. Attacks by Boko Haram have increasingly spilled across borders in the region, prompting Chad to strike at the group inside Nigerian territory. □



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Whale rams boat in Mexico, killing Canadian tourist

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico (AP) A 35-year-old Canadian woman died and two other tourists were injured when a surfacing whale crashed onto their boat, Mexican authorities said Thursday.

The Attorney General's Office for Environmental Protection said two other tourists suffered "considerable" injuries when the whale breached and hit the side of the boat on Wednesday. The office said the boat had been carrying nine tourists on a snorkel tour and quite near shore when the collision occurred. It described the vessel as "a fragile type with inflatable parts."

Photos showed the open boat about 25 feet long, with twin outboard motors apparently undamaged after the collision.

The Baja California Sur state prosecutor's office said the collision near the beach resort of Cabo San Lucas tossed the victim into the water.

A crew member and a passenger lifted her back onto the vessel and Mexican navy personnel moved the woman to shore. She was taken to a clinic, where she died during treatment.

Prosecutors' spokesman Sergio Villarreal said the woman died from head trauma. He said it was the first death in this type of accident he knew of. The woman's hometown has not been released. John Babcock, a spokesman for Canada's Foreign Affairs Department, said that "to protect the private and personal information of the individual concerned, further details on this case cannot be released." "Canadian consular officials in Cabo San Lucas are providing consular assistance to the family in this difficult time," Babcock said.

While officials identified the animal as a gray whale, Jorge Urban, a professor of biology at the Baja California State University who specializes in whales, said it was almost certainly a humpback whale. Urban said such accidents "are not common. □

Cuba allows rare free public Wi-Fi at cultural center

**ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press**

HAVANA (AP) — Cuba has allowed the launch of the island's first known free, public Internet service at a Havana cultural center that quietly began offering open Wi-Fi in recent weeks. Dozens of youths have been flocking each day to

and family overseas. "I come as often as I can," said Adonis Ortiz, a 20-year-old sporting a gold chain and an American-flag bandanna around his neck. He was video-chatting with his father in the United States, whom he last saw in person nine years ago. "Thanks to this service I can

a month in Cuba. The artist said he opened up the hotspot to encourage Cubans to connect and familiarize themselves with the Internet. "This is an unusual thing, and it's only possible through the will to do it and absorb the costs," Kcho told The Associated Press. "It is expensive, but

shout by revolutionary figure Juan Almeida that translates as, "Here, nobody surrenders!"

Cuba has some of the lowest connectivity rates on the planet, with dial-up accounts closely restricted and at-home broadband almost unheard of except in the case of foreigners who pay hundreds of dollars a month for the service in a country where the average salary is around \$20 a month. The country's Internet capability was greatly boosted by the completion of an undersea fiber-optic cable from Venezuela that came online in January 2013.

Authorities say Cuba must prioritize its bandwidth for uses that are deemed to benefit society, such as schools and workplaces. Critics say government prohibitions are the main obstacle to access, although the state has gradually been loosening some controls. Authorities have opened hundreds of Internet salons where an hour online costs \$4.50, at speeds far lower than those at Kcho's studio. A 2014 report by Akamai Technologies found average Internet connectivity speeds around 10.5 mbps in the United States and 23.6 mbps in world leader South Korea. Globally, the average was about 3.9 mbps. With dozens of users at any given time, the signal strength of Kcho's Wi-Fi gets diluted. One user said he sometimes swings by in the middle of the night when nobody else is around and finds it to be unbelievably fast. □



People use a free Wi-Fi network at a center run by famed artist Kcho, in Havana, Cuba, Wednesday, March 11, 2015. Dozens of youths from around the city flock daily to the center. Kcho's spokeswoman said state telecom Etecsa approved the move in a small but unprecedented loosening of Cuba's strict Internet regulations.

(AP Photo/Desmond Boylan)

the center run by famed artist Kcho, whose spokeswoman said state telecom Etecsa approved the move in a small but unprecedented loosening of Cuba's strict Internet regulations. The service is slow compared with what Internet users are accustomed to in much of the world. But connectivity-starved islanders said it's a boon that lets them access Facebook, read news of the world and communicate with friends

talk to him," Ortiz said. Kcho has close ties to the Cuban government: Fidel Castro last appeared in public at the opening of the arts center in January 2014. He said Thursday that the Wi-Fi comes from his personal Internet connection, authorized through the Ministry of Culture, with a speed of 2 mbps. He declined to reveal how much he pays, but ADSL service at that bandwidth generally runs around \$900

the benefit is tremendous. ... I have something that is great and powerful. I can share it, and I am doing so." In the courtyard of his cultural center in western Havana, tech-savvy Millennials lounged in wicker chairs beneath a white canopy, tapping away on laptops and tablets. More were glued to smartphones as they sat on the sidewalk outside. A sign on the exterior wall announced the password: a famous 1956

Haiti sets date for delayed legislative elections

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti has set a date for delayed legislative elections that have been a source of increasing political friction while scheduling its presidential election for later this year.

The election for all members of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies will be Aug. 9, according to an announcement late

Wednesday by Mosler Georges, executive director of the Provisional Electoral Council.

A presidential election will be Oct. 25, with a runoff on Dec. 27 if no candidate gets more than 50 percent of the vote. Elections for local offices will also be held on Oct. 25. The dates are considered tentative until they are confirmed by be-

ing published in the government's official gazette. President Michel Martelly cannot run for re-election because the Constitution bars consecutive terms. Haiti has been under pressure by the U.N. and the U.S. government to schedule the legislative elections. They were supposed to be held in 2011 but the enabling legislation was

blocked by a handful of opposition senators in a standoff with Martelly. Opponents of the president have been holding regular protests in the capital, calling on him to resign. The terms of all sitting lawmakers expired in January and the president has been ruling by decree since then with an appointed prime minister and Cabinet. □



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Divi IMPACT is a non-profit organization that was established on September 2nd, 2010, with the goal to



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of toppings, and Twisted Mac, Chicken and Cheese brings about a spicy surprise in its 3-cheese sauce. Each pasta sensation is tastily seasoned and served with garlic toast. Grilled Norwegian Salmon makes its way south to you wrapped in cedar paper and served with confetti rice. The sweet-yet-spicy barbecue sauce lends an all new fascination to a popular healthy meal choice. Grilled Mahi Mahi is always a favorite at Hard Rock Café as well. Comfy and cozy and oh-so scrumptious smoke house delights are our specialty and our chef never misses. Either alone or in a combo platter, our incredible Half Chicken or West Tennessee-style ribs are rubbed with just the right balance of spices and hickory barbecue sauce to make your



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Ambassadors of Aruba for their 40 years of continued visits to our island at Aruba Beach Club. The symbolic honorary

title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, Transportation, Primary Sector and Culture Mr. O. Oduber as a token of



appreciation to guests who visit Aruba 35-or-more consecutive years.

Ms. Darline S. de Cuba representing Aruba Tourism Authority presented the Emerald Certificate and commemorative Emerald Coin Certificate together with Executive Office Secretary Amanda Singh.

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Uvanitte Family honored at the Playa Linda Resort

PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple who are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, as Ambassadors of Goodwill, at the Playa Linda Resort. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Donald and Mrs. Donna Uvanitte from Massachusetts. Donald and Donna are loyal members of the Playa Linda Resort, and they love Aruba for the weather, beaches, shopping, restaurants but most of all they love the Aruban people. The certificate was presented by Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with resort representatives at the Playa Linda Resort. □





NBA Capsules



Los Angeles Clippers guard Chris Paul (3) goes to the basket in front of Oklahoma City Thunder guard Russell Westbrook (0) during the third quarter of a NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Wednesday, March 11, 2015.

Associated Press

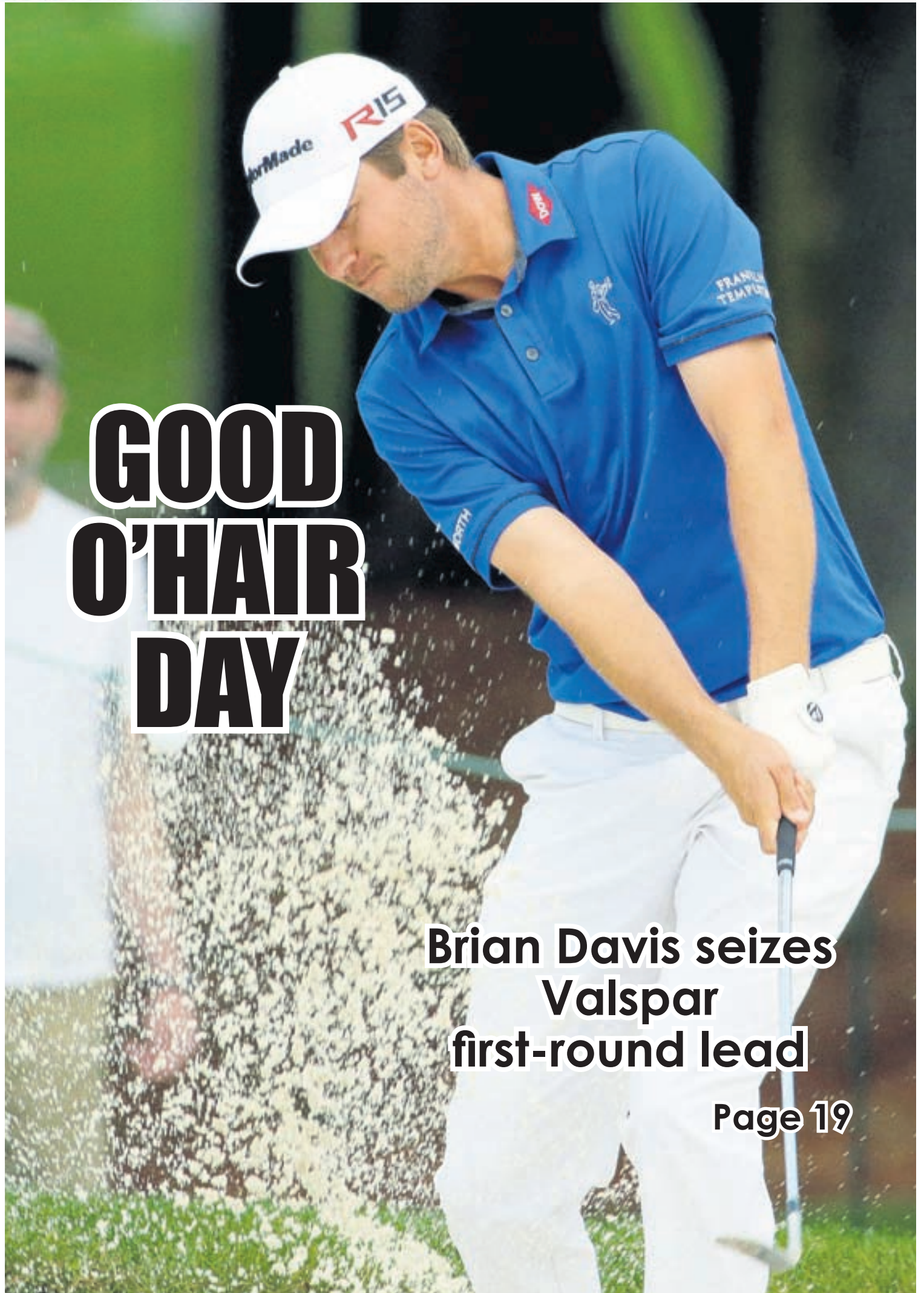
Paul has 33, as Clippers beat Thunder

The Associated Press
OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Chris Paul had 33 points and nine assists, and J.J. Redick added 25 points as the Los Angeles Clippers beat Oklahoma City 120-108 on Wednesday, ending the Thunder's seven-game home winning streak.

DeAndre Jordan had 18 points and 17 rebounds for the Clippers, who are fighting for a top-four seed in the Western Conference playoffs. Oklahoma City is battling to merely make the field and fell a half-game behind the New Orleans Pelicans in the race for the final playoff spot.

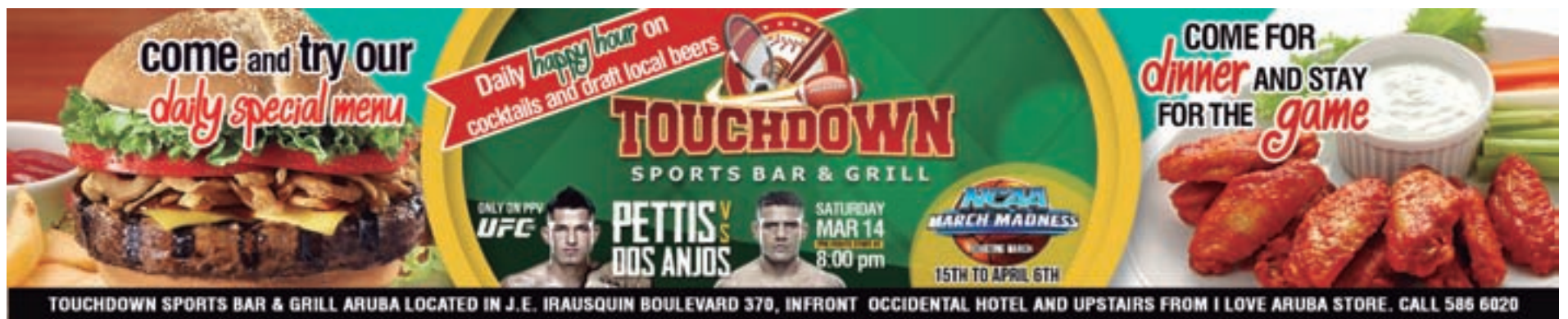
Both teams are playing for extended stretches without their superstar forwards: Kevin Durant for the Thunder, Blake Griffin for the Clippers. In their absence, Paul fared better than his point guard counterpart, Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook.

Continued on Page 22



Sean O'Hair hits from the sand trap on the 10th hole during the first round of the Valspar Championship golf tournament, Thursday, March 12, 2015, at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor, Fla.

Associated Press



Turning 20, Shiffrin wonders when she'll stop being a rookie

KARL RITTER

Associated Press

ARE, Sweden (AP) — Mikaela Shiffrin's days as a teenage sensation are over — and she doesn't mind one bit.

The American has been Alpine skiing's wunderkind for so long that she can't wait to celebrate her 20th birthday on the giant slalom course in Are on Friday.

"It's something that I've been thinking about a bit. People are like 'rookie Mikaela Shiffrin,'" she told The Associated Press on her last day as a teenager. "Why don't I count as a veteran yet? What do I have to do? Do a backflip on skis in the race?"

Having collected more silverware in her teens than most skiers do in their life-



U.S. skier Mikaela Shiffrin gestures during an AP interview ahead of the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup women's slalom and giant slalom event in Are, Sweden, Thursday, March 12, 2015.

Associated Press

that. "I'm hoping it's going to be a fight right until the end," said Hansdotter, who will be racing before her home crowd. "Last year (Shiffrin) was a bit more dominant. She had won the slalom title already before the finals. But now it's tighter." Shiffrin admitted she had "huge amounts of doubt" after poor results and equipment problems at the start of this season. She didn't even make the top 10 in the first slalom race in Levi.

"All of a sudden I felt very human, very mortal," she said. "It was like I was going back to my first World Cup race again. And I had no idea if I actually belonged there."

After some adjustments to her boots and skis, she returned to her winning ways at the end of December in Kuethai, Austria. After that she won two more World Cup slaloms, and successfully defended her world championship title in the discipline.

"I'm comfortable now because I feel I know a little bit more about my equipment," she said. "I understand it better."

The early season struggles in slalom made her drop plans to compete in the super-G, something she now hopes to do next season. Mastering speed events will be key for Shiffrin to become a contender for the overall World Cup title. She's fourth in the overall, far behind leaders Tina Maze and Anna Fenninger, two of the favorites in Friday's giant slalom.

"Adding super-G is going to be a much bigger burden than I initially thought," Shiffrin said. "It's really tough to gauge line and terrain and tactics and the whole thing. It's just a whole another level."

Olympic slalom champion Mario Matt retires

VIENNA (AP) — Austrian skier Mario Matt has retired from the sport, a year after becoming the oldest Olympic gold medalist in Alpine skiing.

"I've found out this season that ski racing isn't the most important thing in my life anymore," Matt said Thursday. "While training on prepared, icy slopes, I knew I'd rather go powder skiing."

Matt, a two-time world champion who turns 36 next month, has an ankle injury and won't start in the two remaining slaloms this season — in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, on Sunday and in Meribel, France, next week.

"Those two world championships were great but winning Olympic gold at my last opportunity was the crown on my career," said Matt, whose triumph at the Sochi Olympics came four years after he



In this Feb. 22, 2014 file photo men's slalom winner Austria's Mario Matt holds his gold medal at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

Associated Press

had dropped to 31st in the slalom rankings and wasn't even included in the Austrian team for the Vancouver Games.

A month after his World Cup debut in December 1999, Matt won his first of 15 races, triumphing with start number of 50 in Kitzbuehel. He also competed in giant slalom and combined

events until 2009.

He took the world slalom titles in 2001 — in his native St. Anton — and in 2007, and added a bronze medal two years ago. Hampered by a hurt ankle after a training crash days before, he failed to finish the opening run at last month's world championships in Colorado. □

time, she doesn't need to do anything, really. Shiffrin already has Olympic and world championship gold medals, 13 World Cup wins, and two crystal globes for the best slalom skier.

In Are — the penultimate stop on the World Cup circuit — she's looking for a strong result in the giant slalom, but her main focus is the slalom on Saturday, when she will be trying to protect her lead in the World Cup standings in that discipline. Shiffrin pushed Sweden's Frida Hansdotter into second place by winning the previous slalom in Maribor, Slovenia.

"I was really excited in Maribor to take back the lead, but I know it's not that easy to keep," Shiffrin said. "I know Frida is going to put up a fight."

Hansdotter, who was second to Shiffrin at the world championships in Beaver Creek, Colorado, and trails the American by 30 points in the slalom standings, promised to do just



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Davis chips in to take lead at Valspar Championship

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)

— Brian Davis takes pride in his short game, which saved him from a rough finish Thursday and gave him the lead in the Valspar Championship.

Coming off back-to-back bogeys, Davis chipped in from 25 feet on the ninth green at Innisbrook for a 6-under 65, giving him a one-shot lead over past champion Sean O'Hair and Ricky Barnes after the opening round.

For the 40-year-old Davis, it was the perfect finish to go with what had been an ideal start. Starting on the back nine of the Copperhead course, he missed three birdie chances inside 15 feet and still went out in 30. There wasn't a hint of trouble until a three-putt from 45 feet on No. 7 and a poor chip at the par-3 eighth that led to bogey.

And right when he thought he had hit a good approach on No. 9, he heard nothing.

"I expected a clap and nobody clapped," he said.

His chip came out with more over-spin because of the grain in the grass

and might have gone about 6 feet by the hole except that it struck the pin.

"Delighted," the Englishman said.

O'Hair got even more evidence that his game is turning around by making eight birdies in the morning for a 66. Barnes, playing in the afternoon, was tied for the lead until he three-putted the par-3 17th from 35 feet and missed a 12-foot birdie putt on the last hole.

Henrik Stenson, at No. 3 the highest-ranked player in the field, made his debut at Innisbrook by dressing in the same colors as the volunteers, though it wasn't intentional, and none of the volunteers had matching pants to go with his periwinkle shirt. He didn't like the swing he had on the range, though he hit enough good iron shots early on to get by. Stenson hit wedge into the par-4 ninth for a final birdie and a bogey-free 67. He was in a group that included Justin Thomas and Puerto Rico Open winner Alex Cejka.

Thomas opened with nine straight pars, a bogey on the par-5 first hole, and then five birdies.

Stenson played with Adam Scott, who made four straight bogeys on his back nine that ruined a good round. He had a birdie on the final hole for a 71. Also in the group was Jordan Spieth, slowed by a double bogey in his round of 70.

"Fell asleep out there for about 30 minutes," Scott said.

The Copperhead course didn't have a lot of bite with its green, soft conditions. Thomas was among those who had mud on the golf ball, which led to his bogey at No. 1. It still was the sturdy test that makes it so popular. Even without much wind and a mostly overcast sky, the course average was about 71.4.

"The golf course was there — no wind and fairly soft — so you have to try to make your score today if you could," Davis said. It wasn't there for John Daly. He opened with a double bogey when he three-putted from 5 feet. He later four-putted for triple bogey on the 14th hole. A birdie on the final hole gave him an 81, but there was a sliver of good news at the end of his long day. He wasn't se-



Ricky Barnes watches his putt on the 17th hole during the first round of the Valspar Championship golf tournament Thursday, March 12, 2015, at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor, Fla.

Associated Press

lected for drug testing. "No, that's tomorrow," said Daly, with a grin. He said on his SiriusXM radio show Tuesday that night the PGA Tour didn't have random testing because he has been picked at Innisbrook the last six years.

O'Hair won at Innisbrook in 2008, though he has fallen on lean times. He has had to earn his card

at the Web.com Tour Finals each of the last two years.

"The last two years have been disappointing for me," O'Hair said. "I lost really everything. I lost my ball-striking and kind of lost my mind, lost confidence as far as how I play the game because I like to hit a lot of different shots and I got very swing-oriented." □

Superb finish puts Madsen into share of lead at Tshwane Open

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Morten Orum Madsen of Denmark finished with a hole-in-one and an eagle for a 7-under 63 to share the first-round lead at the Tshwane Open on Thursday.

Madsen was joined by David Horsey of England, who was bogey-free with seven birdies around the par-

70 Pretoria Country Club course.

They are a shot ahead of Wallie Coetsee and Brett Rumford at the last event of a three-tournament swing for the European Tour in South Africa.

Madsen, whose only win on the European Tour came in South Africa in 2013, had four birdies and a bogey

before his remarkable finish. He spun his tee shot back into the hole on No. 8, his 17th, for his ace. He then eagled the par-5 No. 9 after reaching the green in two with a pinpoint long iron.

"That was fantastic," Madsen said. "For the last couple of weeks I've been hitting some shots that were

really close and I said to my caddie that a hole-in-one was on the cards pretty soon."

At first, Madsen didn't realize he'd holed the tee shot on the short hole. He then threw up his arms and said, "it's in, it's in," before high-fiving his playing partners. Horsey made a late charge to match Madsen's 63,

picking up four birdies in his final seven holes. South Africa's Coetsee and Australia's Rumford share third. Former Ryder Cup winner Edoardo Molinari is also competing in the South African capital and opened with a 66 for a tie for ninth. European Ryder Cup captain Darren Clarke carded a 71. □



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Murray, Forsett, Mathews run to paydirt

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Pro Football Writer

Look who's running to paydirt: DeMarco Murray, Justin Forsett and Ryan Mathews.

Running backs took their place at the head of the free agency class Thursday, the third day of the NFL's business year. Two of them, 2014 Offensive Player of the Year Murray, the league's leading rusher, and Mathews wound up in Philadelphia. Forsett is staying right where he made his breakthrough last season, in Baltimore.

Murray, 27, helped the Cowboys win the NFC East while rushing for a franchise-record 1,845 yards, breaking NFL career rushing leader Emmitt Smith's team mark. He also set a league record with eight straight 100-yard games to start the season.

The contract is for five years and \$42 million, with \$21 million guaranteed.

He'll combine with Mathews to replace two-time All-Pro LeSean McCoy, the NFL's rushing leader in 2013 who was dealt to Buffalo by coach Chip Kelly. "We have great appreciation for his skills, and if there was no salary cap in place, DeMarco would be a Cowboy," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said in a statement. "This came down to an allocation of dollars within the management of the salary cap."

Cowboys star receiver Dez Bryant tweeted: "(at)DeMarcoMurray I wish you would have stayed but I understand your decision... Congrats bro you deserve



In this Jan. 4, 2015, file photo, Dallas Cowboys running back DeMarco Murray (29) celebrates a touchdown run during the second half of an NFL wildcard playoff football game against the Detroit Lions in Arlington, Texas.

it -"

Kelly has been among the busiest barterers in rebuilding the Eagles, also dealing starting quarterback Nick Foles to St. Louis for quarterback Sam Bradford; getting linebacker Kiko Alonso from Buffalo for McCoy; signing cornerbacks Byron Maxwell and Walter Thurmond III; and releasing offensive lineman Todd Herremans, cornerback Cary Williams, linebacker Trent Cole and tight end James Casey.

Mathews, 27, leaves San Diego after an injury-plagued five seasons. A first-round draft pick in 2010, he played in all 16 regular-season games only in 2013, his best season with 1,255 yards rushing and seven to-

tal touchdowns.

Forsett, 29, agreed to a three-year contract with the Ravens. He comes off the finest season of his seven-year career, replacing Ray Rice and rushing 1,266 yards and eight touchdowns.

"Sometimes you have fortunate signings in this business and Justin was one of those," Ravens general manager Ozzie Newsome said. "We were fortunate because he became such a vital part of our on-field success and quickly became a steadying influence in the locker room at an uneasy time for us. He gave us more than we anticipated. From what we expected, he gave us unprecedented production."

Two-time Super Bowl champion cornerback Brandon Browner heads to New Orleans for a three-year deal worth about \$18 million. Browner won a ring with Seattle in 2013, then with New England last season.

The Patriots lost their other starting cornerback, Darrelle Revis, to the Jets in free agency.

New York also brought back another previous fixture in its secondary, Antonio Cromartie, to team with Revis on the corners. Cromartie, 30, gets a four-year contract worth \$32 million in base salary. Revis came back on a five-year, \$70 million contract.

The Jets also re-signed guard Willie Colon to a one-year deal Thursday,

and brought back long snapper Tanner Purdum on a two-year contract.

Another defensive back on the move is safety Nate Allen, from Philadelphia to Oakland on a four-year contract. The Raiders have won just 11 games the past three seasons and have gone 11 straight years without a playoff berth or winning record.

"It's a great thing and like I've been saying, we're planning on winning now," the optimistic Allen said. "We're not trying to rebuild and try to do this or do that, we're trying to make something happen now, this year."

After adding Frank Gore in free agency earlier in the week, Indianapolis cut Trent Richardson, the third overall pick by Cleveland in 2012 who came to the Colts in a huge trade last year. Richardson never made an impact in Indy.

Kansas City released unproductive receiver Dwayne Bowe and saved \$14 million against the salary cap. "This was a tough decision to make," said John Dorsiey, whose signing of Bowe to a \$56 million, five-year deal was one of his first major moves as general manager.

"Dwayne is a team-first guy and he holds a number of team receiving records."

On Wednesday, the Chiefs wrapped up a \$55 million, five-year deal with Jeremy Maclin, who was drafted by Chiefs coach Andy Reid in Philadelphia.

Another receiver took a hit when Stevie Johnson was released by the 49ers. □

Serena ends 14-year boycott with return to Indian Wells

BETH HARRIS

AP Sports Writer

INDIAN WELLS, California (AP) — Serena Williams returned to the BNP Paribas Open on Thursday, ending a 14-year personal boycott of the tournament that began when she was booed as a teenager on her way to winning the title in 2001. Top-ranked Williams took questions for 10 minutes a day before her first match. She never thought she would return to the two-week tournament in the Southern California desert. She even stayed in Los Angeles an extra day because she wasn't yet ready to start the journey. "I was a little nervous to come out here," she said. "In the beginning, I was like, 'What was I thinking?' I kind of had to overcome that hurdle." Earlier in the day, Williams practiced with security on hand to keep fans and media away. She has played just one Fed Cup match since winning the Australian Open in January.

She said on Thursday she was nervous informing her parents about her decision to enter. She said they were both supportive, with her father Richard telling her "it would be a big mistake if I didn't go back. I thought that was really admirable." Now 33, Williams is deep into a career that boasts a gaudy resume: 19 Grand Slam singles titles, the world's No. 1 ranking, and millions of dollars in prize money, and endorsements earned. In 2001, she was just 19 and matches between Serena and older sister Venus were still a novelty. Fans were tantalized by the prospect of two siblings dueling in a semifinal. When Venus pulled out of the match 20 minutes before the start with tendinitis, boos rained down on stadium court, startling Serena. She was offended by later accusations that the sisters' matches were fixed by Richard. "Everyone knows that's not necessarily a true state-

ment. But I guess you do have to ask those questions," Williams said. "I have had nothing but integrity for my whole career." Serena went on to win the final against Kim Clijsters. Her father later said he heard racial slurs in the crowd. "He's been through some things when he was growing up as a young man," she said. "It was a really emotional time for me when I was talking to him (about returning)." Williams recalled praying during the final, when she fell behind in the first set. "I said, 'I don't want to win this match. I just want to get through this moment,'" she said. Williams learned to play tennis about two hours and a world away in Compton, California, a crime-riddled suburb of Los Angeles. She won her first pro match at Indian Wells, playing doubles with Venus in 1997. Her victory over Steffi Graf in the 1999 singles final was her first big title. □



Serena Williams takes part in an interview at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament, Thursday, March 12, 2015, in Indian Wells, Calif.

Associated Press

NHL Capsules

Talbot, Rangers move into 1st by beating Ovechkin, Caps 3-1

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Goalie Cam Talbot and the New York Rangers moved atop the Metropolitan Division by beating the Washington Capitals 3-1 Wednesday night, while overcoming Alex Ovechkin's league-leading 45th goal. Martin St. Louis, Carl Hagelin and J.T. Miller each scored a goal for the Rangers. Talbot made 28 saves, including one particularly spectacular glove grab of a close-in shot from Nicklas Backstrom during a scoreless 5-on-3 chance for the Capitals that lasted 78 seconds. Talbot snatched the puck right at the goal line. The play was reviewed and the



New York Rangers goalie Cam Talbot (33) gets a kiss on the helmet from left wing Chris Kreider (20) after an NHL hockey game against the Washington Capitals, Wednesday, March 11, 2015, in Washington.

Associated Press

original ruling of no-goal stood. A night after a 2-1 victory at the New York Islanders,

the Rangers moved a point ahead of their city rivals with exactly a month left in the regular season. □



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WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 4:00 | 6:25 | 7:40 | 8:55
FRI 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:55 | 7:40 | 11:25
SAT 2:15 | 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:55 | 7:40 | 11:25
SUN & HOL 2:15 | 4:00 | 6:25 | 7:40 | 8:55

SPANISH
MON-FRI 5:10
SAT 2:40 | 5:10 | 10:10
SUN & HOL 2:40 | 5:10 | 10:10

PG



LIAM NEESON | ED HARRIS

RUN ALL NIGHT

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 4:35 | 7:00 | 9:25
FRI 4:35 | 7:00 | 9:25 | 11:50
SAT 2:10 | 4:35 | 7:00 | 9:25 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:10 | 4:35 | 7:00 | 9:25

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MAGGIE SMITH | RICHARD GERE

THE *Second* BEST EXOTIC
MARIGOLD HOTEL

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 3:55 | 6:30 | 9:05
FRI-SAT 3:55 | 6:30 | 9:05 | 11:40
SUN & HOL 3:55 | 6:30 | 9:05

PG



ADAM SANDLER | DAN STEVENS

THE COBBLER

MON-THURS 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35
FRI 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35 | 11:50
SAT 2:50 | 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:50 | 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35

PG-13

SHARLTO COPLEY | DEV PATEL

CHAPPIE

MON-THURS 6:45 | 9:20
FRI 6:45 | 9:20 | 11:55
SAT 6:45 | 9:20 | 11:55
SUN & HOL 6:45 | 9:20

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ANTONIO BANDERAS | TOM KENNY

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE
SPONGEBOB & WATER

MON-FRI 4:40
SAT 2:35 | 4:40
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:40

PG

WILL SMITH | MARGOT ROBBIE

focus

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30
FRI 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SAT 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30

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VINCE VAUGHN | DAVE FRANCO

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

MON-THURS 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35
FRI 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35 | 11:35
SAT 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35 | 11:35
SUN & HOL 5:35 | 7:35 | 9:35

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Mitch Seavey is first Iditarod musher to reach Ruby

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The two-time Iditarod champion Mitch Seavey was the first musher to reach the checkpoint in Ruby, and an up-and-coming musher has been disqualified.

Seavey covered the grueling, 119-mile (192-kilometer) stretch from Tanana in 18 hours, 35 minutes, arriving in the Ruby checkpoint at 6:13 p.m. Wednesday.

For being first to Ruby, he received a "spirit mask" created by Bristol Bay artist Orville Lind and a \$500 credit on PenAir.

He was followed in by his son, defending champion Dallas Seavey, two minutes later. Dallas Seavey, also a two-time champion,



In this March 9, 2014 file photo, Iditarod musher Mitch Seavey, from Seward, Alaska, looks at his team after arriving at the Koyuk checkpoint during the 2014 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in Koyuk, Alaska. Associated Press

covered the route from Tanana in 18 hours, 51 minutes.

A host of mushers were en route on the Yukon to the village.

Brent Sass, who last month won the thousand-mile Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race, was disqualified Tuesday because the Iditarod race marshal

said he had a two-way communications device with him. Mushers are not allowed to have contact with anyone during the race.

Marshal Mark Nordman removed Sass after finding the iPod Touch, which is Wi-Fi capable and could have been used to communicate at checkpoints. "He went, 'Oh my God, what a mistake.' You know, an emotional time for him," Nordman told the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner after Sass was disqualified. "Just a mistake. Do I believe Brent was trying to gain a competitive advantage in the race? Absolutely not. That's my personal opinion."

Sass said he brought the device, similar to an iPhone without a phone function, to listen to music and watch movies while he was on the trail. It didn't register that the device could be hooked into a wireless network at a checkpoint to communicate to the outside world, he said.

"I had no intention of using the Wi-Fi," he said.

A field of 78 mushers began the trek Monday from Fairbanks to the old gold-rush town of Nome. Seventy-seven teams remain in the race.

The race usually kicks off in Willow, but a lack of snow led organizers to move the start farther north to Fairbanks on Monday. □

NBA Capsules

Continued from Page 17

Westbrook, who triple-doubles in five of Oklahoma City's previous six games, finished with 24 points, nine rebounds, seven assists and a career-high 10 turnovers.

WARRIORS 105, PISTONS 98

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Klay Thompson reached the 5,000-point milestone and knocked down two late 3-pointers in a 1:09 span, leading Golden State past Detroit for its fifth straight win.

Thompson finished with 27 points on 11-for-19 shooting in the Warriors' 51st victory — matching their total from last season — and their eighth straight against Detroit.

Andre Drummond had a career-high 27 rebounds — 17 offensive — to go with 22 points in the Pistons' eighth straight loss.

Thompson's two 3s came during a decisive 18-2 run, including one with 5:37 left to put Golden State ahead by 10 as Detroit couldn't fight back.

NUGGETS 115, HAWKS 102

DENVER (AP) — Danilo Gallinari had 23 points and Will Barton added 16 as Denver beat Eastern Conference-leading Atlanta for its eighth straight home win over the Hawks.

By the end of the third quarter, Atlanta coach Mike



Memphis Grizzlies forward Tony Allen, left, blocks the shot of Boston Celtics forward Jonas Jerebko during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Wednesday, March 11, 2015. Associated Press

Budenholzer had seen enough and inserted his bench players, who went on a 24-1 run midway through the fourth quarter to make the score respectable after trailing by 32 with 7:32 remaining. The Hawks haven't won in the Mile High City since Dec. 6, 2006.

Kyle Korver had 18 points to lead Atlanta. He hit five 3-pointers to give him 1,697 in his career and move him past Kobe Bryant (1,694) for 12th in NBA history.

CELTICS 95, GRIZZLIES 92

BOSTON (AP) — Marcus Smart converted a go-ahead, three-point play with 52 seconds left and Avery Bradley added a vital jump shot with 8 seconds remaining as Boston ended a five-game losing streak against Memphis.

Bradley scored 17 points to help the Celtics win their

second in a row as they chase a playoff spot.

Smart put Boston ahead 91-90 with the last of 14 lead changes in the game, which ended when Mike Conley missed a deep 3-pointer for Memphis just before the buzzer.

Conley led Memphis with 20 points after missing time in the second half with an injured ankle or knee. Tony Allen added 16 points, and Zach Randolph had 14 points, eight rebounds and five assists.

HEAT 104, NETS 98

MIAMI (AP) — Dwyane Wade had 28 points and nine assists, and Chris Andersen equaled a career high with 18 points and set a season high with 14 rebounds as Miami finished off a season sweep of Brooklyn. Goran Dragic added 17 points in his return to the Mi-

ami lineup. The Heat went 7-0 against New York's two teams this season — 4-0 against the Nets, 3-0 against the Knicks — and moved back into the No. 8 spot in the Eastern Conference playoff race, helped by Sacramento beating Charlotte earlier Wednesday night.

The Heat were without center Hassan Whiteside, serving a one-game suspension for elbowing Boston's Kelly Olynyk on Monday night.

Deron Williams and Jarrett Jack each scored 18 points for the Nets. Brook Lopez finished with 15 points and 13 rebounds.

BULLS 104, 76ERS 95, OT

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Aaron Brooks scored seven of his season-high 31 points in overtime to help short-handed Chicago beat Philadelphia.

Pau Gasol had 27 points and 16 rebounds, and Nikola Mirotic finished with 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Bulls. They snapped a three-game skid without four regulars and three of their top five scorers.

The Bulls dressed only 10 players and were without Jimmy Butler, Derrick Rose, Taj Gibson and Joakim Noah. Rose had knee surgery Feb. 27, but said Monday that hopes to return this season, targeting 4-to-6 weeks for a comeback from yet another knee injury. Butler (elbow) missed his sixth

straight game, and Gibson (ankle) sat out his seventh in a row. Noah (knee) was a late scratch.

Ish Smith led Philadelphia with a career-high 23 points.

TRAIL BLAZERS 105, ROCKETS 100

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP) — LaMarcus Aldridge had 26 points and 14 rebounds as Portland held off the Houston.

The Trail Blazers limited James Harden to 18 points and tied the Rockets for third place in the Western Conference.

Harden was averaging just over 27 points to rank second in the league.

Corey Brewer scored 23 points for Houston, including 17 in the fourth quarter.

Robin Lopez finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Blazers, who have won a Western Conference-best 27 games at home this season.

SUNS 106, TIMBERWOLVES 97

PHOENIX (AP) — Markieff Morris scored 24 points and Eric Bledsoe had 18 points and nine assists as Phoenix beat Minnesota.

Rookie T.J. Warren added a career-high 17 points, and Marcus Thornton hit back-to-back 3-pointers early in the fourth quarter and finished with 14 points.

Warren's dunk with 3:20 left punctuated the win. He was fouled on the basket and made the free throw to give the Suns a 12-point lead. □



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Google's safe browsing system targets 'unwanted software'

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

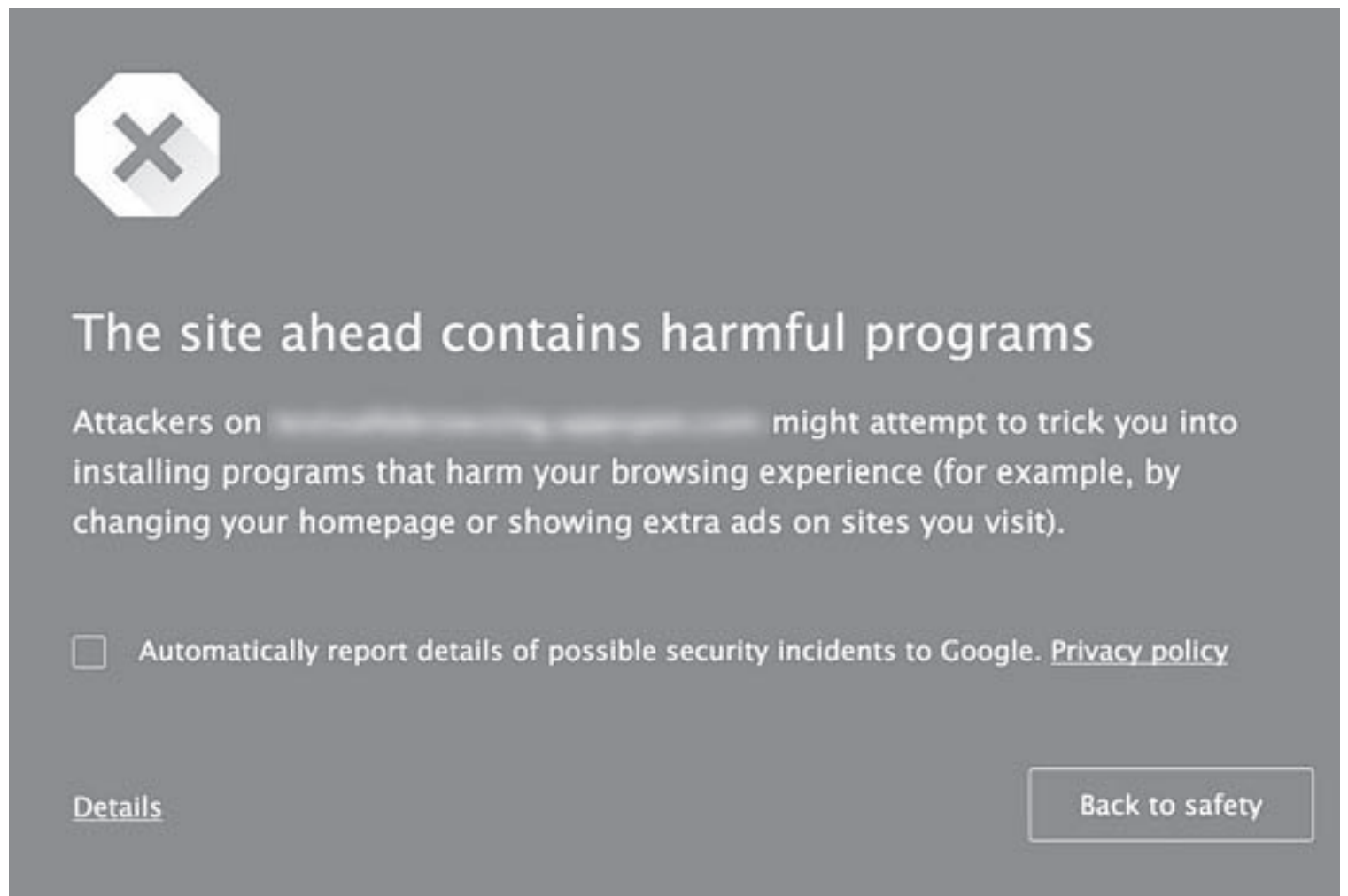
Get ready to see more red warning signs online as Google adds ammunition to its technological artillery for targeting devious schemes lurking on web-sites.

The latest weapon is aimed at websites riddled with "unwanted software" — a term that Google uses to describe secretly installed programs that can change a browser's settings without a user's permission. Those revisions can unleash a siege of aggravating ads or redirect a browser's users to search engines or other sites that they didn't intend to visit.

Google had already deployed the warning system to alert users of its Chrome browser that they were about to enter a site distributing unwanted software. The Mountain View, California, company just recently began to feed the security information into a broader "safe browsing" application that also works in Apple's Safari and Mozilla's Firefox browsers.

All told, the safe browsing application protects about 1.1 billion browser users, according to a Thursday blog post that Google Inc. timed to coincide with the 26th anniversary of the date when Tim Berners-Lee is widely credited for inventing the World Wide Web. Microsoft's Internet Explorer doesn't tap into Google's free safe browsing application. Instead, Explorer depends on a similar warning system, the SmartScreen Filter.

Google's alerts about unwanted software build upon the warnings that the safe browsing system has already been delivering for years about sites infected



This image provided by Google shows an example of the warnings generated when Google's safe browsing technology detects a website riddled with "unwanted software." Associated Press

with malware, programs carrying viruses and other sinister coding, and phishing sites that try to dupe people into sharing passwords or credit card information.

Whenever a potential threat is detected by the safe browsing system, it displays a red warning sign advising a user to stay away. Google also is demoting the nettlesome sites in the rankings of its dominant Internet search engine so people are less likely to come across them in the first place. Google disclosed Thursday that the safe browsing application has been generating about 5 million warnings a day, a number likely to rise now that unwanted software is now part of the detection system.

As it is, Google says it dis-

covers more than 50,000 malware-infected sites and more than 90,000 phishing sites per month.

The safe browsing application had gotten so effective at flagging malware and phishing that shysters are increasingly creating

unwanted software in an attempt to hoodwink people, said Stephan Somogyi, Google's product manager of safe browsing.

"The folks trying to make a buck off people are having to come up with new stuff and that puts us in a

position where we have to innovate to keep pace with these guys," Somogyi said in an interview. "You are now going to see a crescendo in our enforcement on sites that meet our standard of having unwanted software." □

Nokia provides free mapping services app for Apple users

HELSINKI (AP) — Nokia says it has started providing mapping services for free download in Apple's App Store, after a successful launch of the service on Android devices. The HERE offline maps, with navigation and search features covering more than 150 countries,

is immediately available for devices using the iOS operating system, such as iPhones and iPads.

Nokia said Thursday that more than 4 million users have downloaded HERE apps since its Android launch last year.

The maps, a fixed feature on Windows phones, con-

tain real-time traffic information for more than 40 countries.

Nokia's HERE is one of the few global computerized roadmap providers, with a long history of working with automotive companies and an 80 percent market share for embedded automotive maps. □

Intel cuts 1Q revenue forecast, cites weak PC demand

BRANDON BAILEY

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Intel's stock fell Thursday after the giant chipmaker lowered its first-quarter revenue forecast, citing weak demand for business desktop PCs and a strong dollar that affects revenue from overseas sales.

The new forecast calls for little or no revenue growth, in contrast with company statements in recent months

that its PC business was returning to growth after two years of weakness.

Intel is the world's leading maker of microprocessor chips that serve as the brains for most personal computers, but its business has suffered as more consumers have turned to smartphones and tablets that use chips made by other companies. Although it has launched its own line of chips for handheld de-

vices, Intel has been struggling to catch up in that market. Intel CEO Brian Krzanich had been projecting growth since last fall, when he told analysts that the company's personal computer business was performing better than expected after the company had two years of overall sales declines. The company reported in January that revenue for the fourth quarter and the 2014 fiscal

year had increased by 6 percent over the previous periods. But on Thursday, Intel said small and medium-sized businesses are not buying as many new PCs as expected to replace older machines that run on the now-outdated Windows XP operating software from Microsoft. Analysts say Microsoft's decision to end support for Windows XP helped boost PC sales last year, but that boost has largely sub-

sided.

Santa Clara, California-based Intel is now projecting first-quarter revenue of \$12.5 billion to \$13.1 billion. The midpoint of that range is the same as the \$12.8 billion in revenue that Intel saw in the first quarter of 2014. But Intel previously had forecast revenue in the range of \$13.2 billion to \$14.2 billion and analysts surveyed by FactSet were predicting \$13.71 billion. □

US stocks gain as dollar rally wanes; Banks jump



Traders Peter Tuchman, left, and Jason Harper, work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange at the close of trading. A sharp rally in the dollar relented on Thursday, helping push the stock market to its best day in five weeks. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A sharp rally in the dollar relented on Thursday, helping push the stock market to its best day in five weeks.

The U.S. currency dropped

for the first day in nine against the euro after a weak retail sales report raised questions about the strength of the economy. A jump in the dollar since the start of the month has pushed stocks back from

record levels. Investors are worried that the stronger U.S. currency could crimp corporate earnings by hurting overseas sales. About half of the revenue generated by companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 in-

dex comes from overseas. Financial stocks were among the biggest gainers after a number of banks got approval from the Federal Reserve to raise dividends and buy back shares. Intel was one of the days' biggest losers after the company cut its revenue forecast for the first quarter.

"It's the pullback in the dollar that's cheering investors," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Rockwell Global Capital. "The frenzy that we saw in the foreign exchange markets has, at least for today, calmed down."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index climbed 25.71 points, or 1.3 percent, to 2,065.95. The best performance for the index since Feb. 3.

The Dow Jones industrial gained 259.83 points, or 1.5 percent, to 17,895.22. The Nasdaq composite climbed 43.55 points, or 0.9 percent, to 4,893.29.

Stocks have slumped since the start of the month on

speculation that the Federal Reserve could raise its benchmark interest rate in June as hiring continues to improve. Policy makers have held their main rate close to zero for more than six years to help the economy recover from the Great Recession.

Thursday's slide in the dollar and the positive news on the banks more than outweighed a government report that showed retail sales were sluggish in February. The ongoing weakness is raising concerns about the strength of the economy. Retail sales remain poor despite a big drop in gas prices last year. U.S. retail sales fell in February as auto purchases dropped by the most in more than a year and Americans spent less at restaurants and home improvement stores. Retail sales fell 0.6 percent last month after a 0.8 percent decline in January, the Commerce Department said Thursday. It was the third straight drop. □

America's business stockpiles frozen solid in January

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

U.S. businesses did not add to their stockpiles for a second straight month in January as total business sales fell by the largest amount in nearly six years.

Business stockpiles were unchanged following a similar flat reading in December, the Commerce Department reported Thursday. Sales in Janu-

ary dropped 2 percent. That was the sixth straight monthly sales decline and the biggest monthly drop since sales tumbled 2.7 percent in March 2009 during the depths of the last recession.

While businesses have slowed their stockpiling in the face of falling sales, economists remain optimistic that activity will rebound in coming months. Solid employment growth

and falling gas prices should give consumers more money to spend on other items.

The economy added 295,000 jobs in February, marking the 12th consecutive month that job gains have been above 200,000. That is the longest stretch since 1994 to 1995. Analysts believe the new jobs will bolster consumer spending, which accounts for 70 percent of econom-

ic activity. Stronger demand is expected to spur restocking by businesses at all levels of the supply chain from manufacturing to wholesalers to retailers. In the fourth quarter, economic growth, as measured by the gross domestic product, slowed to just 2.2 percent, slower than the government's initial estimate of 2.6 percent. Much of the revision in GDP growth occurred

because inventory building in the fourth quarter was weaker than initially estimated. But analysts say that could translate into strength in the current quarter as businesses build up their relatively lean inventories.

The January sales decline was led by a 3.1 percent drop in sales at the wholesale level. Manufacturing and retail sales were also down. □

The Case for Old Ideas



ROSS DOUTHAT

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One of the anxieties haunting the 21st century is a fear that technological change will soon make many human lives seem essentially superfluous.

It's a fear as old as the Luddites, but the promise of computing, robotics and biotechnology has given it new life. It suddenly seems plausible that a rich, technologically proficient society will no longer offer meaningful occupation to many people of ordinary talents, even as it offers ever-greater wealth, ever-widening powers and, perhaps, ever-longer life to the elite.

That anxiety dominates the most provocative conversation you can eavesdrop on this week, between the Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman and the Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari on the website Edge.org. Harari, the author of a recent history of the human species, "Sapiens," argues that our own era's breakthroughs will create new classes and class struggles, just as the Industrial Revolution did.

Soon, if not tomorrow, the rich may be able to re-engineer bodies and minds, making human equality seem like a quaint conceit. Meanwhile, the masses will lose their jobs to machines and find themselves choosing between bread and circuses (or drugs and video games) and the pull of revolutionary violence - with the Islamic State's appeal to bored youths possibly a foretaste of the future.

Harari's scenario, as he concedes, is only a projection, and one may doubt that technology can go as far as he imagines. But some of the dislocations he envisions are already here: Work is disappearing for the erstwhile working class, the rich are increasingly self-segregating and marrying among themselves, and virtual realities are replacing older forms of intimacy.

What I find most provoking, though, is Harari's insistence that in dealing with these problems, "nothing that exists at present offers a solution," and "old answers" are as "irrelevant" now as they were (allegedly) during the Industrial Revolution.

He means this as a critique of religious revivalists in particular: Not only the Islamic State's seventh-century longings, but any movement that seeks answers to new challenges "in the Quran, in the Bible." Such seeking, he argues, led to dead ends in the 19th century, when religious irruptions from the Middle East to China failed to "solve the problems of industrialization." It was only when people "came up with new ideas, not from the Shariah, and not from the Bible, and not from

some vision," but from studying science and technology, that answers to the industrial age's dislocations emerged.

This argument deserves highlighting because I think many smart people believe it. And if we're going to confront even modest versions of the problems Harari sees looming, we need to recognize what his argument gets wrong.

New ideas, rooted in scientific understanding, did help bring societies through the turbulence of industrialization. But the reformers who made the biggest differences - the ones who worked in the slums and with the displaced, attacked cruelties and pushed for social reforms, rebuilt community after it melted into air - often blended innovations with very old moral and religious commitments.

When technological progress helped entrench slavery, the religious radicalism of abolitionists helped destroy it. When industrial development rent the fabric of everyday life, religious awakenings helped reknit it. When history's arc bent toward eugenics, religious humanists helped keep the idea of equality alive.

Overall, we overestimate how pious the West of 1750 or 1800 was - and we underestimate how much the more egalitarian West of 1950 was shaped by religious mobilization and revival. Nor is this just a Western phenomenon. As the developing world has converged in prosperity with Europe and America, old religious ideas that have been given new life - Christianity in China, Hinduism in India, Pentecostalism in Latin America and Africa - are playing as important a social role as any secular or scientific perspective. (In the Middle East, too, it's a good bet that any successful answer to the Islamic State will also be Islamic.) The point is not that traditional ideas alone can save societies in transition. That way lies the Islamic State and the foredoomed ruin of countless old regimes.

But the assumption, deeply ingrained in our intelligentsia, that everything depends on finding the most modern and "scientific" alternative to older verities has been tested repeatedly - with mostly dire results. The 19th-century theories that cast themselves as entirely new and modern were the ones that devastated the 20th century, loosing fascism and Marxism on the world.

Which makes Harari's concluding provocation feel like an unintended warning: "In terms of ideas, in terms of religions," he argues, "the most interesting place today in the world is Silicon Valley, not the Middle East." It's in Silicon Valley that people are "creating new religions" - techno-utopian, trans-humanist - and it's those religions "that will take over the world."

He could be right. But if those new ideas are anything like the ones that troubled the 20th century, we may find ourselves looking to older ones for rescue soon enough. □



Partying Like It's At Least 1995



PAUL KRUGMAN

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Six years ago, Paul Ryan, who has since become the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and the GOP's leading voice on matters economic, had an Op-Ed article published in The New York Times. Under the headline "Thirty Years Later, a Return to Stagflation," he warned that the efforts of the Obama administration and the Federal Reserve to fight the effects of financial crisis would bring back the woes of the 1970s, with both inflation and unemployment high. True, not all Republicans agreed with his assessment. Many asserted that we were heading for Weimar-style hyperinflation instead.

Needless to say, those warnings proved totally wrong. Soaring inflation never materialized. Job creation was sluggish at first, but more recently has accelerated dramatically. Far from seeing a rerun of that '70s show, what we're now looking at is an economy that in important respects resembles that of the 1990s.

To be sure, there are big differences between America in 2015 and America in the '90s. TV is much better now, the situation of workers much worse. While stocks are high and there is talk of a new technology bubble, there's nothing like the old euphoria. There is also, unfortunately, no sign that the great productivity surge of 1995-2005,

brought on as businesses adopted information technology, is coming back.

Still, we're now adding jobs at a rate not seen since the Clinton years. And it goes without saying that low inflation combined with rapid job growth makes nonsense of all those predictions that Obamacare, or maybe just the president's bad attitude, would destroy the private sector.

But pointing out yet again just how wrong the usual suspects on the right have been about, well, everything isn't the only reason to note parallels with the 1990s. There are also implications for monetary policy: Recent job gains have brought the Fed to a fork in the road very much like the situation it faced circa 1995. Now, as then, job growth has taken the official unemployment rate down to a level at which, according to conventional wisdom, the economy should be overheating and inflation should be rising. But now, as then, there is no sign of the predicted inflation in the actual data.

The Fed has a dual mandate - it's supposed to achieve both price stability and full employment.

At this point price stability is conventionally taken to mean low but positive inflation, at around 2 percent a year. What does it mean to achieve full employment? For the Fed, it means reaching the NAIRU - the non-accelerating-inflation rate of unemployment, which is consistent with that inflation target.

The Fed currently estimates the NAIRU at between 5.2 percent and 5.5 percent, and the latest report puts the actual unemployment rate at 5.5 percent. So we're there - time to raise interest rates!

Or maybe not. The NAIRU is supposed to be the unemployment rate at which the economy overheats and an inflationary spiral starts to kick in. But there

is no sign of inflationary pressure. In particular, if the job market really were tight, wages would be rising quickly, whereas they are in fact going nowhere.

The thing is, we've been here before. In the early-to-mid 1990s, the Fed generally estimated the NAIRU as being between 5.5 percent and 6 percent, and by 1995, unemployment had fallen to that level. But inflation wasn't actually rising. So Fed officials made what turned out to be a very good choice: They held their fire, waiting for clear signs of inflationary pressure.

And it turned out that the U.S. economy was capable of generating millions more jobs, without inflation, than it would have if the Fed had reined in the boom too soon.

Are we in a similar situation now? Actually, I don't know - but neither does the Fed. The question, then, is what to do in the face of that uncertainty, with no inflation problem yet in sight.

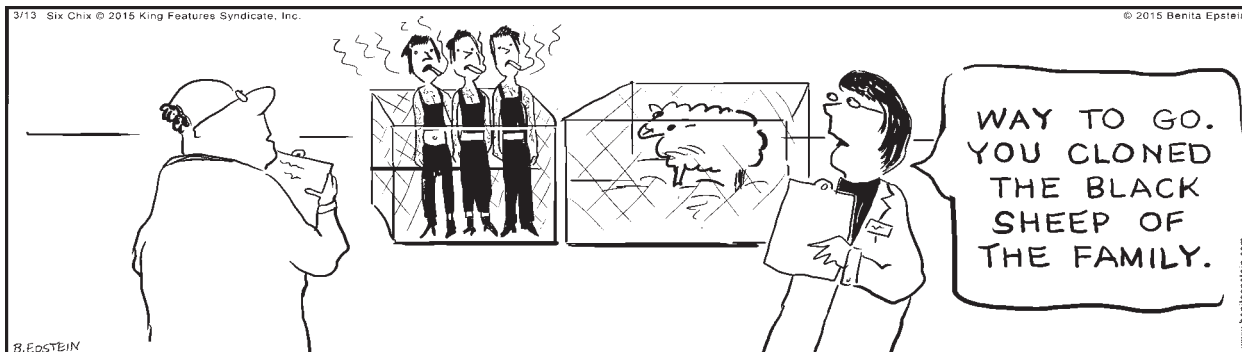
To me, as to a number of economists - perhaps most notably Lawrence Summers, the former Treasury secretary - the answer seems painfully obvious: Don't yank away that punch bowl, don't pull that rate-hike trigger, until you see the whites of inflation's eyes. If it turns out that the Fed has waited a bit too long, inflation might overshoot 2 percent for a while, but that wouldn't be a great tragedy. But if the Fed moves too soon, we might end up losing millions of jobs we could have had - and in the worst case, we might end up sliding into a Japanese-style deflationary trap, which has already happened in Sweden and possibly in the eurozone.

What's worrisome is that it's not clear whether Fed officials see it that way. They need to heed the lessons of history - and the relevant history here is the 1990s, not the 1970s. Let's party like it's 1995; let the good, or at least better, times keep rolling, and hold off on those rate hikes. □

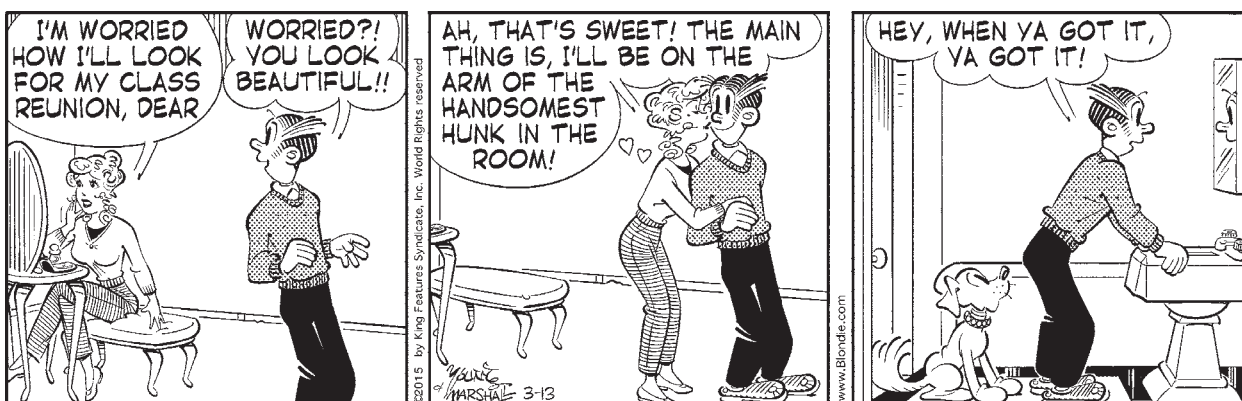
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	4			8		9		
	8		7				1	2
6		7				5		
				4			3	
9								8
	7			2				
		5				3		1
2	3				9		7	
		6		3			4	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

3/13

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

7	1	6	4	8	2	5	9	3
4	9	2	6	5	3	1	8	7
5	8	3	7	9	1	2	6	4
8	7	9	1	4	6	3	2	5
3	5	4	9	2	8	6	7	1
2	6	1	5	3	7	9	4	8
9	2	7	8	1	5	4	3	6
6	3	5	2	7	4	8	1	9
1	4	8	3	6	9	7	5	2

ACROSS

- 1 Water lily
- 6 Reverberate
- 10 Local yokel
- 14 Bumbling
- 15 "There'll be ___ time in the old town..."
- 16 As wise ___ owl
- 17 At ___; in jeopardy
- 18 Engrossed
- 19 Midterm or final
- 20 Broad-minded
- 22 Sharp as a tack
- 24 Concludes
- 25 Broom user
- 26 Traditional shell beads
- 29 Overcook milk
- 30 Ms. Gardner
- 31 Ore seeker
- 33 Misplaces
- 37 ___ up; arranges
- 39 Hauled behind
- 41 Dictionary man
- 42 Valuable item
- 44 Stitched
- 46 To and ___; back and forth
- 47 ___ up; become happy again
- 49 Commotion
- 51 Wild
- 54 Big swallow
- 55 Quantity
- 56 Member of Elizabeth II's church
- 60 Loon or lark
- 61 Pond scum
- 63 Pueblo home
- 64 Meanie
- 65 Sound the horn
- 66 Magazine's advice to subscribers
- 67 Orbison & Acuff
- 68 ___ Benedict; fancy breakfast
- 69 Put on clothing

DOWN

- 1 Shopper's paper
- 2 Climb ___; mount
- 3 Greenish-blue
- 4 Maintenance
- 5 Breastbone
- 6 Merits; deserves
- 7 Informal talk
- 8 Short leap
- 9 Canada's capital
- 10 Revealed the misdeeds of
- 11 Spend
- 12 Sew loosely
- 13 Go into
- 21 Fess up
- 23 ___ out; betray
- 25 Carpenter's tool
- 26 "Jeremiah ___ bullfrog..."
- 27 Hail Marys, for short
- 28 Floor pads
- 29 Waste disposal system
- 32 Face parts
- 34 ___ drink; soda pop
- 35 British noble
- 36 Loafer or pump

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17					18				19			
20					21			22	23			
			24				25					
26	27	28				29						
30			31		32			33	34	35	36	
37			38		39			40		41		
42			43		44			45		46		
			47		48			49		50		
51	52	53					54					
55						56				57	58	59
60					61	62			63			
64					65				66			
67					68				69			

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/13/15

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

FOUL	SCALE	SUMO
LINE	CRIED	ASAN
ALMS	HEMISPHERE	
BYA	ALES	LARKS
	NOBEL	TAR
HANGUP	WIZARD	
ALERT	TRALA	WE
TIRE	WEAVE	THEN
HAL	SHAME	YIELD
	SYSTEM	PEDALS
	TON	PALER
AGLOW	PILL	SRS
TRANSCRIPT	MAUL	
MICE	OUTER	ALSO
SPED	TEARY	NSEW

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3/13/15

- 38 Isolates
- 40 Spray for pests
- 43 At that time
- 45 Dolt
- 48 Manor and its grounds
- 50 Miss Muffet's terrorizer
- 51 Toil
- 52 Juan's friend
- 53 Fret
- 54 Pesky insects
- 56 Very eager
- 57 Dunce cap
- 58 Lincoln and Beame
- 59 Latest info
- 62 Record book

Syria: Civil war leaves families uprooted, separated

BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press
AL-RAMA, Lebanon (AP)

— Mohammed Bakkar spends his days with his father and son in a small classroom in Lebanon near the Syrian border, where they cook, eat, wash and sleep, waiting for the day they can reunite with the rest of their family.

Bakkar's mother, wife and four other children are hundreds of miles away in Jordan's Azraq refugee camp, squeezed into a white prefab \edy caused by the Syrian civil war.

Marking its fourth anniversary this month, the war has claimed the lives of more than 220,000 people and has driven more than 11 million of the prewar population of 23 million from their homes.

Of those, more than 3.8 million have fled to neighboring nations.

They now make up what many fear will be a new semi-permanent diaspora, scattered around the region. Some languish in or-



Fatima Bakkar, 83, from Syria, holds her tears as she tells her story during an interview with The Associated Press at Azraq refugee camp in Azraq, 62 miles east of Amman, Jordan. Fatima, living with daughter-in-law Hamida and four grandchildren, waits for a day when they can reunite with their loved ones living in a refugee camp in Lebanon.

(AP Photo/Raad Adayleh)

ganized camps or shelters. own for housing in cities
Some scrounge on their and towns. □

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24/7

NASA: Evidence of ocean beneath solar system's biggest moon

ALICIA CHANG
AP Science Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The largest moon in the solar system harbors a salty ocean beneath its icy shell, the latest member to join a growing club of watery moons, NASA said Thursday.

"The solar system is now looking like a pretty soggy place," said Jim Green, director of planetary science at NASA headquarters.

The ocean on Jupiter's Ganymede is estimated to be much deeper than the oceans on Earth — about 60 miles (100 kilometers) thick and buried under 95 miles (150 kilometers) of ice. The moon's ocean is believed to have more water than all of Earth.

The quest to find potentially habitable places where microbes can thrive has centered on objects in the solar system with hidden water, a key ingredient for life.

Ganymede joins a cadre of solar system moons where evidence of underground oceans has been discovered in recent years. The list includes Jupiter's Europa moon and the Saturn moons Titan and Enceladus. A separate team of scientists reported this week that hot springs may be bubbling beneath the chilly surface of tiny Enceladus.

The latest evidence comes from the Hubble Space

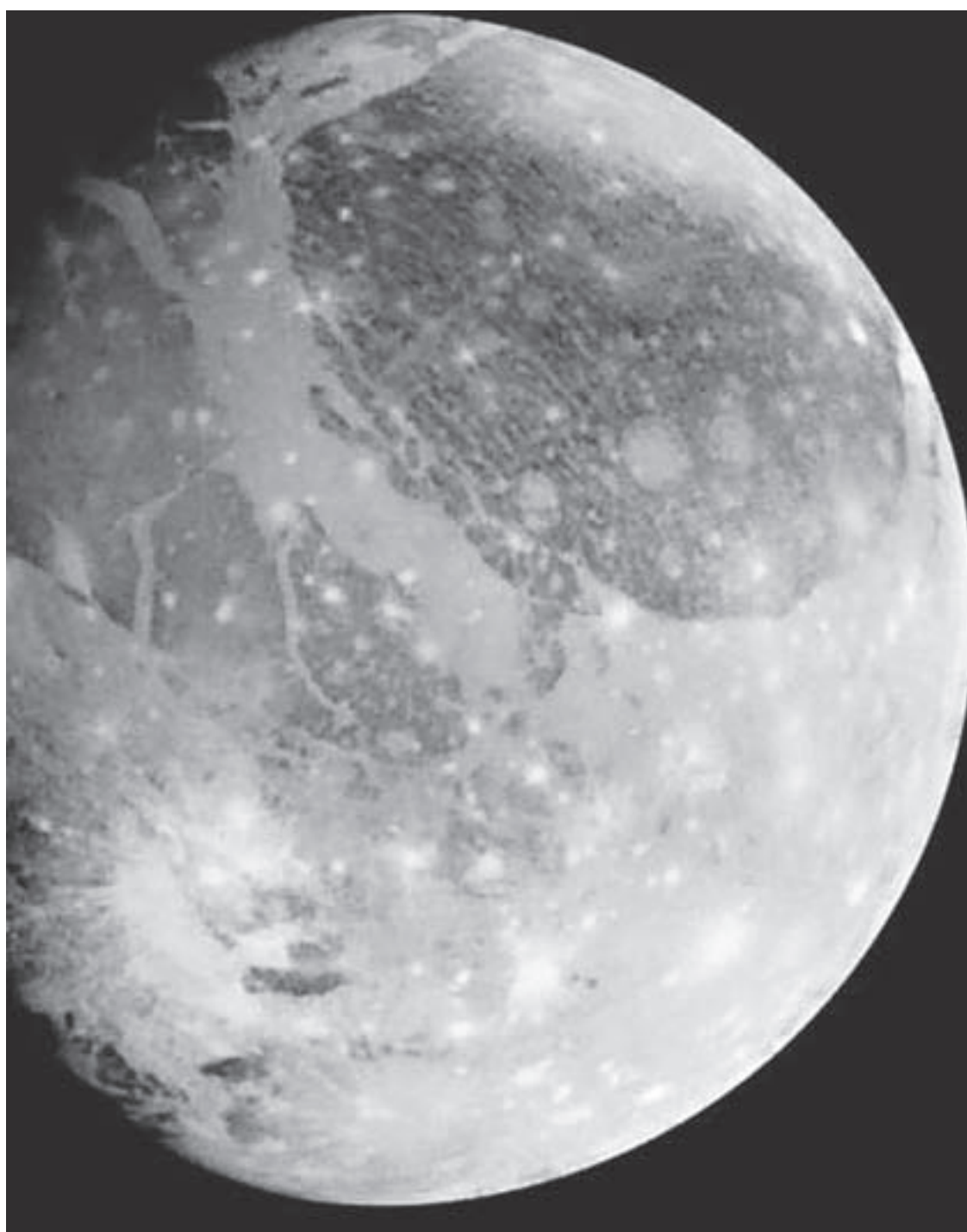
Telescope, which observed Ganymede's magnetic field for a glimpse of its interior. The workhorse telescope studied changes in colorful auroras in the moon's polar regions that are produced by its magnetic field to determine the existence of an ocean lurking underneath.

Since the 1970s, scientists have suspected Ganymede may have a watery interior. NASA's Galileo spacecraft flew by Ganymede in the 1990s and beamed back tantalizing signs of an ocean.

Hubble's observations are the most convincing yet, said Joachim Saur, professor of geophysics at Germany's University of Cologne, who led the study published in the Journal of Geophysical Research.

Ganymede is one of about five dozen moons circling Jupiter. It's the largest moon around the giant planet and the biggest moon in the solar system. With a diameter of 3,270 miles (5,260 kilometers), it's slightly larger than the smallest planet, Mercury.

Ganymede is among several big Jupiter moons discovered in 1610 by Galileo, who called it Jupiter III. It was later named after Ganymede, a Trojan prince in Greek mythology. The European Space Agency is planning to launch a mission in 2022 on an eight-year journey toward Jupiter. After cir-



This June 28, 2009 image provided by NASA, taken by the international Cassini spacecraft, shows Enceladus, one of Saturn's moons. Associated Press

cling Jupiter and flying by three of its largest moons, the spacecraft plans to slip into orbit around Gany-

mede for a close-up look — the first attempt at orbiting an icy moon.

NASA is building radar for

the mission that's designed to pierce through ice and peer deep into Jupiter's moons. □

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Eric Clapton to celebrate 70th bday at MSG

NEW YORK (AP) — Eric Clapton will celebrate his 70th birthday with two shows at Madison Square Garden in May.

The iconic guitarist announced Thursday that he will perform at the famed New York City venue May 1-2. He turns 70 on March 30.

Clapton, a former member of the Yardbirds and Cream, has performed at MSG more than 40 times.

Clapton will be accompanied by his band members Paul Carrack, Steve Gadd, Nathan East, Chris Stainton,



In this April 14, 2013 file photo, Eric Clapton performs at Eric Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festival 2013 at Madison Square Garden in New York. Associated Press

Sharon White and Michelle John at the MSG shows. The concert dates could change due to the NBA playoffs. □

After 'Boyhood,' Hawke finds an unlikely fountain of youth

JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — When Ethan Hawke was young, he was fascinated with Albert Schweitzer, a 19th-century philosopher and missionary who deliberately set aside years of his life for piano playing before he would dedicate himself to helping others. Hawke made a similar pledge to himself about acting. "But 40 came so fast and I didn't want to give it up at all," Hawke said in a recent interview. "But I knew there was something to what Schweitzer was saying. You can't spend your whole life indulging yourself and expect something good to happen." A midlife



This image released by IFC Films, piano instructor Seymour Bernstein, left, poses with actor Ethan Hawke. Associated Press

crisis is one way to put what Hawke, now 44, was going through. For the first time in his career, he was having performance anxiety. Having long considered himself an eternal student, Hawke — whose wide range of work (two novels, stage acting, directing) suggest his curious, exploratory nature — wasn't sure exactly who he was anymore. Hawke, the father of four, was in a place not unlike where his "Boyhood" co-star Patricia Arquette eventually finds herself in that movie: on the other side of life, wondering what comes next. "You start seeing how much of the road is behind you and you start realizing that the next part is probably going to go just as fast," says Hawke. "What does it mean?" These were the kind of questions rattling around Hawke's head when he joined what turned out to be a fortuitous dinner party in New York several years ago. There he met his friend's piano instructor, a gentle old man named Seymour Bernstein. Though an accomplished pianist whose performances earned raves decades earlier, the 86-year-old Bernstein long ago retired from any public artistic life. Instead, from his humble Upper West Side studio, he has taught the piano and, his students would say, something about life.

Bernstein's view of art for its own sake — amateurism over professionalism

— resonated deeply with Hawke. Over the next few years in between other, more glamorous projects, Hawke made a documentary of Bernstein. On Friday, "Seymour: An Introduction" opens in theaters. "I knew when I left that dinner that there's a lot of people who would enjoy the conversation that I just had," says Hawke. In his quiet way, Bernstein had reframed Hawke's anxieties, telling him they should be embraced, and that the crossroads Hawke felt he was at was really a single, continuous path. "And he did that for me in, like, 45 minutes." "Seymour: An Introduction" has won raves on the festival circuit, where Bernstein's warmth and wisdom has struck a nerve with many as he did for Hawke. "Strangers come up to me and say: 'I don't know anything about music but everything you say in that film pertains to me,'" says Bernstein. "In Telluride, I was walking on the cobblestone street to lunch and we passed three people. They came over to me and gave me a hug and put their chin against my shoulder and cried. All of them did that!" Though he has long eschewed the spotlight, the monk-like Bernstein is reveling in the attention. "I'm a star!" he chuckles. "I have so many interviews!" Hawke compares paling around with the newly famous Bernstein to "taking Greta Garbo to the mall." □

Let it go! Disney announces plans for 'Frozen' sequel

NEW YORK (AP) — Let it go (on)! The Walt Disney Co. has announced plans to make a sequel to the animated mega-hit "Frozen."

At the company's annual shareholders meeting in San Francisco on Thursday, Disney executives officially announced plans for "Frozen

2." Since its release in November 2013, "Frozen" has become a juggernaut for Disney. It made nearly \$1.3 billion at the global box office and generated a massive merchandising revenue stream. The film also won the Oscar for best animated feature. Because of that

enormous success, a sequel has been widely expected. Walt Disney Co. chief executive Bob Iger says directors Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee will return for the sequel.

A "Frozen" short is to play in front of Disney's latest release, "Cinderella," which opens in theaters Friday. □

Univision's Rodner Figueroa fired for Michelle Obama comment

GISELA SALOMON
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Talk show host Rodner Figueroa was fired from Univision after saying that Michelle Obama looks like someone from the cast of "Planet of the Apes."

Figueroa, who's known for his biting fashion commentary, made his remarks during a live segment of the show "El Gordo y la Flaca" in which the hosts were commenting on a viral video that shows a makeup artist transforming himself into different celebrities, including Michelle Obama. "Well, watch out, you know that Michelle Obama looks like she's from the cast

of 'Planet of the Apes,' the movie," Figueroa, 42, said with a giggle.

When hostess Lili Estefan countered with "What are you saying?" and host Raul de Molina said Obama was very attractive, Figueroa

defended his remark, saying "but it is true." In a statement, Univision called Figueroa's comments "completely reprehensible" and said they "in



In this Nov. 19, 2014 file photo, Rodner Figueroa arrives at the Latin Recording Academy Person of the Year Tribute honoring Joan Manuel Serrat in Las Vegas. Associated Press

no way reflect the values or opinions of Univision."

Figueroa, who in 2014 won a Daytime Emmy Award, did not respond to requests for comment Thursday. □

A travel series serving food for thought in global hot spots

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In less skilled hands, this might have been little more than a food fight.

The ambitious, borderline-explosive formula for "Breaking Borders" lands a journalist and a chef in a global hot spot, where they host dinner for guests locked in conflict — and hope newfound understanding is an item on the menu.

"Breaking Borders" is a travelogue, cooking show and dining-table summit all in one. And somehow it works, with each component of its cultural, culinary and political mission enhancing the others, at least to judge from the first of its 13 episodes, airing Sunday at 9 p.m. EDT on the Travel Channel.

On this premiere, Peabody-winning journalist Mariana van Zeller and acclaimed chef Michael Voltaggio travel to Jerusalem and the West Bank where van Zeller (who is also chief investigative correspondent for Fusion) gives viewers a personal look at a wondrous and troubled region, while Voltaggio (a "Top



In this image provided by the Travel Channel, journalist Mariana Van Zeller, left, and chef Michael Voltaggio, hosts of Travel Channel's "Breaking Borders," pose in front of an art piece showing a dove in a bulletproof vest by graffiti artist Banksy in Bethlehem, Palestine.

Chef" winner and owner of Los Angeles' ink restaurant) prepares a mouthwatering feast tailored to local tastes (while he faces such challenges as never having cooked a kosher meal before). Their guests (who ordinarily would never share a smile, much less a meal) include a Jewish winemak-

er who lives with his family in the West Bank, a Palestinian bookstore owner, and an Israeli activist who advocates separate states for Israel and Palestine. Will this glorious feed and some fine kosher wine help pave the way to a bit of common ground? "There was a very heated

debate," van Zeller acknowledges. "But at the end of the meal, when the cameras were off, they all stood up and hugged each other, and hugged us. That's when Michael and I realized that so much could happen with this show." The season's itinerary also takes the pair to

Associated Press

Belfast (for a gathering of Catholic Republicans and Protestant Nationalists), Cairo (in the chaotic aftermath of the Arab Spring), Sarajevo and Cuba, as well as the divide between Arizona and Mexico. In Rwanda, where hundreds of thousands of Tutsi were slaughtered by the Hutu in the early 1990s, a meal is shared by the two peoples. And in Cambodia, a man who once was close to savage dictator Pol Pot breaks bread with a man whose father was killed by the Pol Pot-ruled Khmer Rouge. "The show is very much about going behind the headlines," says van Zeller, "so it was important to us that these were conflicts we've all heard about. And though the conflicts are obviously different, they have one thing in common: There are people who are deeply affected. That's what the show is about: their stories and their willingness to share them with the other side." But that happens only after the show's audience is acquainted with the region, the issues at hand, the native cuisine and, on a very human level, the people. □



In this Sept. 16, 2009 file photo, composer Stephen Schwartz poses in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Associated Press

BETH J. HARPAZ

AP Travel Editor

NEW YORK (AP) — An Oscar-winning composer of Broadway musicals, Stephen Schwartz, will create four musicals to debut on-board Princess cruise ships, the cruise line announced Thursday.

Princess Cruises called it a "first-of-its-kind cruise industry partnership" with such a

big name from Broadway and Hollywood. Schwartz, 67, is the composer of "Wicked," "Pippin" and "Godspell." He's won Oscars for "Pocahontas" and "The Prince of Egypt" and Grammys for "Godspell," "Pocahontas" and "Wicked." The new productions will open over the next few years.

Princess Cruises partners with Oscar-winning composer

The first musical, "Magic to Do," will debut aboard the Crown Princess ship this fall, celebrating Schwartz's "lifelong fascination with magic" and combining some of his most famous songs with a new song written for the show, according to Princess. It's not unusual for cruise lines to turn to established Broadway shows for on-board entertainment. Royal Caribbean cruises offer full-length productions of Broadway musicals "Cats," "Chicago," "Saturday Night Fever" and "Mamma Mia!" Guests on Norwegian Breakaway can see the shows "Rock of Ages" and "Burn the Floor." Disney Cruise Line, meanwhile, is theming cruises on its hit movie "Frozen" this summer with deck parties, char-

acter meet-and-greets, menus and performances on select sailings. Disney Magic itineraries include the Norwegian fjords that inspired the hit movie. What's different here, of course, is that an established composer is writing a new musical to debut on a ship. Schwartz was scheduled to appear Thursday evening at an event to discuss the deal. In a statement, he said he was "excited about the possibility of using the enormous resources available with Princess to create new and innovative theatrical entertainment. Their onboard theaters are Broadway-caliber venues with state-of-the-art technical capability, and coupled with their access to first-rate performers, I see it as an extraordi-

nary and almost irresistible opportunity." Others from the world of entertainment identified by Princess as part of the team producing the shows include Don Frantz, associate producer of "The Lion King" and "Beauty and the Beast" on Broadway; Jeremy Railton, four-time Emmy winner with design credits for the 2002 Winter Olympics ceremonies; Ken Billington, Tony Award-winning lighting designer; Mark Hartman, music director with Broadway credits including "Sondheim on Sondheim" and "Avenue Q"; and Jennifer Paulson-Lee, choreographer with credits including "101 Dalmatians" and "Seussical." Princess Cruises operates 18 ships and is owned by Carnival Corp. □



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